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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE
(2023-24)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

[Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirty-fifth Report of Standing Committee on Defence (17th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023-24 on 'General Defence Budget, Border Roads Organisation, Indian Coast Guard, Defence Estates Organisation, Defence Public Sector Undertakings, Welfare of Ex-Servicemen and Defence Pension (Demand Nos. 19 and 22)']

FORTY-THIRD REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

December, 2023 / Agrahayana 1945 (Saka)

FORTY-THIRD REPORT

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(2023-24)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 20.12.2023

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 20.12.2023



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

December, 2023 / Agrahayana 1945 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2023-24)

SHRI JUAL ORAM

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CHAIRPERSON

Lok Sabha

2	Shri Durai Murugan Kathir Anand
3	Kunwar Danish Ali
4	Shri Nitesh Ganga Deb
5	Shri Rahul Gandhi
6	Shri Reddeppa Nallakonda Gari
7	Shri Devaragunda Venkappa Sadananda Gowda
8	Shri Annasaheb Shankar Jolle
9	Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser
10	Shri Suresh Kumar Kashyap
11	Prof. (Dr.) Ram Shankar Katheria
12	Dr. Rajashree Mallick
13	Shri Jugal Kishore Sharma
14	Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde
15	Shri Prathap Simha
16	Dr. Amar Singh
17	Shri Brijendra Singh
18	Shri Mahabali Singh
19	Shri Durga Das Uikey
	Vacant*
	Vacant@

Rajya Sabha

20	Dr. Ashok Bajpai
21	Shri Prem Chand Gupta
22	Shri Sushil Kumar Gupta
23	Shri Venkataramana Rao Mopidevi
24	Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tasa
25	Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi
26	Smt. P.T. Usha
27	Shri G.K. Vasani
28	Lt. Gen. (Dr.) D. P. Vats (Retd.)
29	Shri K.C. Venugopal

*Shri Anumula Revanth Reddy ceased to be member of the Standing Committee on Defence w.e.f. 8th December, 2023 vide Lok Sabha Secretariat notification no 21/1(3)/2023/T(B) dated 8th December, 2023.

@ Shri Uttam Kumar Nalamada Reddy ceased to be member of the Standing Committee on Defence w.e.f. 13th December, 2023 vide Lok Sabha Secretariat notification no 21/1(5)/2023/T(B) dated 13th December, 2023.

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. Sanjeev Sharma - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Tirthankar Das - Director
3. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary
4. Smt. Preeti Negi - Executive Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Defence (2023-24), having been authorized by the Committee, present this Forty-third Report (17th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirty-fifth Report of Standing Committee on Defence (17th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023-24 on 'General Defence Budget, Border Roads Organisation, Indian Coast Guard, Defence Estates Organisation, Defence Public Sector Undertakings, Welfare of Ex-Servicemen and Defence Pension (Demand Nos. 19 and 22)'.

2. The Thirty-fifth Report (17th Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 21st March, 2023. The Report contained 50 Observations/ Recommendations. The Ministry of Defence furnished Action Taken Replies on all the Observations/Recommendations in July, 2023.

3. The Report was adopted at the Sitting held on 18th December, 2023.

4. For facility of reference and convenience, Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the Report.

5. An analysis of Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Thirty-fifth Report (17th Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Defence is given in Appendix II.

**New Delhi;
18 December, 2023
27 Agrahayana, 1945 (Saka)**

**JUAL ORAM
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Defence**

REPORT

CHAPTER – I

This Report of the Standing Committee on Defence deals with Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirty-fifth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023-24 on 'General Defence Budget, Border Roads Organisation, Indian Coast Guard, Defence Estates Organisation, Defence Public Sector Undertakings, Welfare of Ex-Servicemen and Defence Pension (Demand Nos. 19 and 22)', which was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 21 March, 2023.

2. The Thirty-fifth Report (17th Lok Sabha) of the Committee contained 50 Observations/Recommendations on the following aspects:-

Para No.	Subject
General Defence Budget	
1	Summary of Ministry of Defence Budget and Demands for Grants 2023-24
2	Projection and allocation under Defence Budget 2022-23
3-4	Growth of Defence Budget
5	Expenditure on Research & Development (R&D)
6	Modern warfare
7	Manpower
8	Agnipath scheme
9	Incidents of espionage in the Forces
Border Roads Organisation (BRO)	
10-11	Budgetary Allocation to BRO
12-14	Challenges faced in execution of projects and maintenance of roads
15	Safety parameters and features in infrastructure built by BRO
16-17	Labour deployed by BRO
18	Tourism and self-employment opportunities in Ladakh
Indian Coast Guard	
19-20	Budget 2023-24 and 2022-23
21	Manpower
22	Anti-drug trafficking operations
23	Marine Police
Defence Estates Organisation	
24-25	Budgetary provision
26	Amendment in Cantonment Act, 2006
27	Merger of civilian areas in the Cantonments with adjoining municipalities
28	Interests of the Civil Population in Cantonment Areas
29	Building Bye-laws of Cantonments
30	Resolution of legal cases pertaining to Defence Lands

Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs)	
31	Efficiency of the DPSUs
32-33	Indigenization efforts and self reliance in Defence sector
34	Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)
35	Recruitment of Non-Official /Independent Directors in the Boards of DPSUs
Welfare of Ex-Servicemen	
36	Budget
37	Resettlement Opportunities
38-39	Reservation benefits for Ex-Servicemen
40-42	Zila Sainik Board
43-44	Agnipath scheme
45	Non-uniformity in ex-gratia monetary benefits/compensation provided to the martyrs
46	Vacancies in the Armed Forces reserved for the widows of Defence personnel
47	Appointing/promoting the Olympic medal winners of the country to the Officer cadre in the Armed Forces
Defence Pension	
48	Budgetary Provisions
49	Sparsh-System For Pension Administration (Raksha)
50	One Rank One Pension (OROP)

3. The complete Action Taken Replies have been received from the Government in respect of 50 Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report in July 2023. Replies to Recommendation Nos. 7, 8, 43, 46 and 47 are of classified nature and have been categorized as 'Accepted'. Replies to rest of the recommendations have been examined and categorized as follows:-

(i) **Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government (Chapter II):**

Para Nos.1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40,41,42, 3,44,45,46,47,48, 49 and 50

(Total - 49)

(ii) **Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies received from the Government (Chapter III):**

Para No. Nil

(Total -0)

(iii) **Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration and to be commented upon (Chapter IV):**

Para No. 4

(Total - 1)

(iv) **Observations/recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited (Chapter V):**

Para No. Nil

(Total - 0)

4. **The Committee desire that the Action Taken Notes in respect of comments of the Committee contained in Chapter I of the Report should be furnished to them at the earliest and in any case, not later than six months of the presentation of this Report.**

5. **The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of the Observations/Recommendations made in the Thirty-fifth Report in the succeeding paragraphs.**

General Defence Budget

A. Growth of Defence Budget.

Recommendation (Para No. 4)

6. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee learn that the total Defence Budget (including MoD (Civil) and Defence Pensions) is ₹ 5,93,537.64 crore for FY 2023-24, which is 13.18% of total Central Government Expenditure and 1.97% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the year 2023-24. Also, Capital Budget of Ministry of Defence for 2023-24 is approximately 17.12% of the total capital expenditure of the Central Government Expenditure. A close examination of the data furnished by the Ministry reveals that from the year 2020-21 onwards, Defence Expenditure as percentage of Central Government Expenditure has hovered around 13-14 percent (approximately). Defence Expenditure, as a percentage of GDP, which has been in the range of 2-3 percent 2018-19 onwards, stands at 1.97 percent for 2023-24 (BE).

The Committee note the Ministry’s submission in this context that the global ideal estimated for Defence Expenditure as a percentage of GDP is 3 percent. This is done on the assumption that Tax to GDP ratio is in the range of 10 to 13 percent. Further, it

was stated by the Defence Secretary that taking into account the increase in the country's GDP, the Ministry may not be able to absorb 3 percent of the GDP. The Committee understand that there are some constraints in having a benchmark percentage of GDP earmarked for deciding on the allocation to the Defence Sector. However, they are of the considered view that requirements of capital acquisition and modernization, ascending salary and pension bills, position of Rupee vis a vis dollar and Defence expenditure by the neighbouring countries warrant introspection for arriving at a definite benchmark percentage of Defence expenditure as the country's GDP. Therefore, the Committee recommend in unequivocal terms that if not the global parameter of 3 percent, feasibility may be explored to fix parameter for Defence expenditure as the country's GDP which will help in forming a right trajectory for the Defence Expenditure for our country."

7. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

"It may not be appropriate to think about defence spending in terms of national economic output as countries vary in terms of economic size, tax to GDP ratio, defence needs etc. As far as India is concerned, the expenditure on Defence is the largest amongst the Central Ministries and it has been growing consistently since 2014-15 onwards. Defence preparedness is a result of the capabilities acquired over the years and not merely on budget allocation of a particular year. Allocation for defence is adequate to sustain the desired level of defence preparedness. Further based on expenditure during the year, pending committed liabilities, critical/operational requirements, threat perception etc., additional funds, if required, are sought at Supplementary/RE stage. The progress of expenditure is reviewed from time to time to ensure that the allocated funds are optimally utilized towards operational activities so that urgent and critical capabilities are acquired without any compromise to operational preparedness of the Defence Services."

8. **The Committee recall that they had, in their Thirty-fifth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha), recommended for exploring the possibility for fixing a parameter for Defence expenditure as the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with the intention to help forming a right trajectory for the Defence Expenditure for our country. They also recall that at the time of examination of Demands for Grants of the Ministry (Demand No. 19 & 22), the Committee had expressed their considered view that requirements of capital acquisition and modernization, ascending salary and pension bills, the position of Rupee *vis a vis* dollar and Defence expenditure by the neighbouring countries warrant introspection for arriving at a definite benchmark percentage of defence expenditure as the Country's GDP. However, the Committee are surprised to note that the Ministry have not taken any action towards arriving at a definite benchmark with respect to defence expenditure. The Ministry are of the view that defence preparedness is a result of the capabilities acquired over the years and not merely on budget allocation of a particular year. They have also stated that the progress of defence expenditure is reviewed from time to time to ensure that the allocated funds are optimally utilized towards operational activities so that urgent and**

critical capabilities are acquired without any compromise to the operational preparedness of the Defence Services. While appreciating the concern and the efforts made by the Ministry towards preparedness of the Defence Forces in the country, the Committee feel that the recent wars in the international arena should act as a grim reminder that the nomenclature of war has really changed and defence preparedness in terms of an electronic warfare has become an imperative need for our nation. The Committee are of the opinion that for ensuring such preparedness in view of the prevailing security scenario in the world today, there is a need for constant requirement of funds at regular intervals. The Committee, therefore, would like to reiterate their earlier recommendation for fixing a definite benchmark percentage for defence expenditure as country's GDP, which, they feel, will help in forming a right course for defence expenditure in the country in view of the prevailing security eco-system in the world today.

B. Expenditure on Research & Development (R&D)

Recommendation (Para No. 5)

9. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee learn that Capital allocation of Defence Services for FY 2023- 24 is ₹ 1,62,600 crore. This head has seen a jump of ₹ 10,230 crore i.e. 6.7 percent over FY 2022-23. The allocation to Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO) has been enhanced by 9 percent to ₹ 23,264 crore for BE 2023-24. Further, 75 percent of Defence Capital procurement budget has been earmarked for domestic industry in FY 2023-24. In this regard, the Ministry has submitted that apart from allocation to DRDO, to strengthen the Defence Industrial eco-system in the country, Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS) allocations have been enhanced to ₹ 116 crore and ₹ 45 crore, respectively. It was also brought to the notice of the Committee that research and development do not require astronomical amount at one go. It was also assured that no R&D project will be allowed to languish for lack of budgetary support. The Committee, on scrutiny of the documents provided by the Ministry of Defence in connection with examination of Demands for Grants for the year 2023- 24, observe that the actual expenditure on R&D in 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 amounted to ₹ 17,779.24 crore against BE allocation of ₹ 19,421.02 crore, ₹ 16,075.07 crore against BE allocation of ₹ 19,627.35 crore and ₹ 18,669.66 crore against BE allocation of ₹ 20,757.44 crore, respectively. The Committee are of the considered view that in the competitive Defence field, our nation has to be self-reliant for inventing, developing and producing cutting edge Defence technology. Moreover, the private Defence industry is in a nascent stage in our country and is not in a position to spend huge sum on research and development and come out with very critical and protected technologies which could be adapted by our manufacturing sector. Therefore, in order to equip our Forces with state-of-the-art Defence technology, the Committee recommend that stringent mechanism to ensure full and prudent utilisation of the funds allocated for Defence Research & Development may be instituted by the Ministry. Further, the figures regarding allocated amount at Revised Estimates stage and actual

expenditure incurred on R&D including those of iDEX and DTIS and other related schemes for Financial Year 2022-23 may be intimated to the Committee within one month of the presentation of this Report.”

10. The Ministry in its action taken reply has stated as under:

“Details of Budget Estimates for the DDR&D at different Budgetary stages sanctioned and actual expenditure since 2019 is as under:

(Rs in Cr)

YEAR	BE APPROVED	RE APPROVED	MA APPROVED	ACTUALS
2019-2020	19021.02	17730.78	17730.78	17375.13
2020-2021	19327.35	16466.29	16145.74	15706.96
2021-2022	20457.44	18337.44	18720.44	18290.99
2022-2023	21330.20	21130.20	21130.20	20584.58

Details of Budget Estimates for the Department of Defence Production (w.r.t. iDEX& DTIS) for the year 2022-23:

(Rs in Cr)

YEAR	Title	BE ALLOCATION	RE ALLOCATION	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE
2022-2023	Grant in Aid General Innovation for Defence Excellence (IDEX)	60.00	78.00	78.00
	Grants for Creation of Capital Assets Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS)	23.43	5.43	

Government has taken adequate steps to make the country self-reliant by developing indigenous advanced technologies and complex systems. Following are the initiatives/ steps taken by Government for indigenization of manufacturing of technology intensive defence equipments and weapons and for creating a domestic defence production eco-system:

- Defence Acquisition procedure (DAP 2020) is promulgated to maximize acquisition of defence equipment through indigenous sources and promote domestic manufacturing. Govt has ensured that the most preferred option for capital acquisition is 'Buy Indigenous Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM)' category equipment followed by 'Buy (Indian)' category. The 'Make' categories aim to achieve the objective of self-reliance by involving greater participation of Indian industrial eco-system including private sector.
- The provisions of Govt. funding have been introduced for Make-I, TDF and iDEX projects. Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme executed by DRDO supports indigenous

development of components, products, systems and technologies by MSMEs and Start-ups. Funding under TDF scheme was enhanced from Rs 10 Cr to Rs 50 Cr per Project, and the same under iDEX Prime scheme has been enhanced from Rs. 1.5 Cr to Rs. 10 Cr. It will give further boost the vision of 'Aatmanirbharta in Defence'.

- Four 'Positive Indigenization Lists' of defence equipments and platforms for which there would be an embargo on the import.
- The 'Development cum Production Partner (DcPP)' model of DRDO is implemented where-in Industry is taken up as DcPP in system development projects. Both development and production units are manufactured by industry along with life cycle support.
- DRDO test facilities have been opened to the industries for utilization. The test facilities have been listed on DRDO website and have been communicated to them. The facilities are being utilized by the industries.
- Two Defence Industrial Corridors have been set up in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu to catalyze indigenous production of defence and aerospace related items.
- Defence R&D has been opened up for industry, start-ups and academia with 25% of defence R&D budget earmarked for the purpose. This is being implemented through various existing schemes and new schemes have been proposed.
- In order to promote indigenous design and manufacturing, funds have also been earmarked for procurement from indigenous sources. For the FY 2023-24, funds have been earmarked in the ratio 67.75:32.25 between Domestic and Foreign procurement in the Capital Acquisition Budget of the Ministry of Defence (MoD). In addition, the MoD has also directed for spending an amount of Rs. 1500 Cr. towards procurement from Start-ups.
- Nil Transfer of Technology (ToT) fees are being charged from DcPPs /PAs/ LSI.
- Industries have been provided with free access for DRDO patents.
- Lists of systems which will be developed by 'industry only' have been identified by DRDO. The same have been promulgated by MoD. DRDO will not develop such systems.
- DRDO is skilling youth (Internships, apprenticeship, electives in B.Tech, M.Tech courses) to make ready for Defence industry."

11. The Committee, in their Original Report, had recommended that a stringent mechanism to ensure full and prudent utilisation of the funds allocated for Defence Research and development be instituted by the Ministry. They had also sought details regarding the allocated amount at the Revised Estimates stage and actual expenditure incurred on R&D including those of Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS) and other related schemes for the Financial Year 2022-23. From the Action Taken Reply submitted by the Ministry, the Committee find that at the Budgetary stages of BE, RE and Modified Appropriations (MA) of Department of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D), the amount was Rs. 21130.20 crore,

however, the actual spending was only Rs. 20584.58 crore, which is Rs. 545.62 crore less than the allocation. The Committee feel that underutilisation of the allocated fund by any Ministry depicts lack of meticulous planning and a determination to spend within a given time-frame. They, therefore, desire that the Ministry should make meticulous planning in order to avoid underutilisation of fund in future. For the Grant in Aid General Innovation for Defence Excellence (IDEX), BE Allocation was Rs. 60 crore, which was increased to Rs. 78 crore at the time of Revised Allocation. However, for Grants for Creation of Capital Assets Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS), the amount was drastically reduced from Rs. 23.43 crore to Rs 5.43 crore. The Ministry has not provided the actuals of the same period in respect of DTIS nor has it given any rationale for the reduction of the amount. In this regard, the Committee would like to be apprised of the reasons for reducing the allocation for DTIS at the RE stage as well as the actual expenditure for the Financial Year 2022-23 within one month of the presentation of this Report.

C. Modern Warfare

Recommendation (Para No. 6)

12. The Committee had recommended as under:

“ The Committee are cognizant that the world is witnessing a shift in the strategy of warfare where ‘small’ arms/weapons are proving to be more lethal and potent than bigger platforms in certain areas. The Committee learn that programme for weaponization of drones is ongoing in the country and certain degree of success has been achieved in this field. Taking into account this paradigm shift in threat perception, the Committee recommend that synergized efforts by DRDO and the Services may be made on war footing mode to develop and adopt these small and potent arms/equipment so that combat readiness of our Forces is commensurate with hybrid and modern war tactics. In regard to the drone capabilities, the Committee would highlight whether by DRDO or by private sector specialized drones such as Anti Drone/Interceptive Drone/Combat Drone/Sea Drone etc should be developed with a fast pace so that we are not left behind in this area. In another context, the Committee would like to know in general the developments, if any, in regard to Jetpack suits to be used by the Army Personnel in future warfare.”

13. The Ministry in its action taken reply has stated as under:

“DRDO has designed and developed Multicopter / Drones with high endurance. These developments have been carried out anticipating the future requirements by the Armed Forces. These Multicopter / Drones can be weaponised and can also be used for logistic usages.

DRDO is making various drone based systems and anti-drone systems based on the requirements of User Agencies. DRDO has developed a comprehensive integrated Anti-Drone System which comprises of detection, identification and neutralization (both Hard Kill and Soft Kill) of a drone. The solutions can be customised for different challenges.

Three services (IA, IAF & IN) have already placed 23 orders on industry for manufacturing of this Anti-Drone System developed by DRDO.

DRDO has taken up a feasibility study to demonstrate wearable human flight platform, utilizing battery driven Electric Ducted Fans (EDFs). The prototype of the same is under development. EDFs are the alternative to the micro gas turbine (Jet Engine) used in the Jetpack suit by other countries.”

14. The Committee recall that they had recommended for making synergized efforts by DRDO and the Services to develop and adopt small and potent arms/equipment so that combat readiness of our Forces is commensurate with hybrid and modern war tactics. The Committee comprehend from the Action Taken Reply of the Ministry that anticipating the future requirements, DRDO has designed and developed Multicopter/Drones with high endurance. Further, DRDO is making various drone-based systems and anti-drone systems based on the requirements of User Agencies. The Committee, during their recent study visits to certain Defence establishments, learnt that new challenges in the field of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) are Nano drones and swarm drone attacks. In this context, the Committee recommend that while designing and developing various drone-based systems and anti-drone systems for modern warfare, these upcoming challenges may be taken into account to enable our Forces in effectively dealing with prevailing threat perception. They also desire that updates regarding the progress of wearable human flight platforms be intimated to the Committee at the time of submitting the Action Taken Statement.

BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION

D. CHALLENGES FACED IN EXECUTION OF PROJECTS AND MAINTENANCE OF ROADS

Recommendation (Para No. 13)

15. The Committee had recommended as under:

“During examination of Demand for Grants for 2023-24, the Committee desired written information regarding the specific cases/projects of the BRO which are being delayed due to pending clearances and their current position. Till the date of finalization of this Report, the requisite information as assured by the Ministry of Defence has not been received. The Committee would now like the information to be furnished forthwith and in any case, at the time of furnishing Action Taken replies. Also, the Committee recommended that in order to save time and energy of BRO in getting the approvals and factoring in their strategic role in the operation preparedness of the Forces, exemption may be provided to BRO, especially in forward areas, from seeking Forest and wildlife clearances.”

16. The Ministry in its action taken reply has stated as under:

“Specific cases/Projects of BRO which are delayed due to pending forest clearance and wildlife cases and their current position is attached as per Annexure-II.

Further, Central Government through introduction of ‘The Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023’ has sought exemption of forest land falling within a distance of 100 km along International borders/LAC/LOC from the provision of this Act for construction of strategic linear projects of national importance and concerning national security.”

17. The Committee, in their original Report, had desired written information regarding the specific cases/projects of the BRO which were being delayed due to pending clearances and their position. In reply, the Ministry has furnished a list of 49 such pending cases of Forest and Wildlife clearance. The Committee are cognizant that the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill, 2023 has been enacted by the Parliament and contains provision regarding the exemption of strategic projects concerning national security located within 100 km of distance from the International Borders, Line of Actual Control, Line of Control and upto 10 hectares of land proposed for security-related infrastructure. Keeping in view the enabling provision of the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act, 2023, wherever applicable, efforts may be intensified by the Ministry to obtain Forest and Wildlife clearance for pending BRO projects.

CHAPTER – II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

GENERAL DEFENCE BUDGET

Summary of Ministry of Defence Budget and Demands for Grants 2023-24

Recommendation (Para Nos. 1-2)

Recommendation No. 1:

The Committee note that the Defence Budget is categorised/grouped under four Demands for Grants viz. Demand No. 19 – Ministry of Defence (Civil), Demand No. 20– Defence Services (Revenue), Demand No. 21 – Capital Outlay on Defence Service and Demand No. 22 – Defence (Pension). Demand Nos. 19 and 22 come under Civil/Pension Estimates and Demand Nos. 20 and 21 constitute Defence Services Estimates. They also note that the requirements for the Civil expenditure of the Ministry of Defence Secretariat, Defence Accounts Department, Canteen Stores Department, Defence Estates Organisation, Coast Guard Organisation, Jammu & Kashmir Light Infantry (J&K LI), Border Roads Organization etc. are provided for in Demand No. 19- MoD(Civil). The Defence Services Estimates (DSE) reflect, the detailed estimates for the Defence Services and Organizations/Services covered under Grant Number 20 and 21 of the Ministry of Defence. The Services and Organizations covered under DSE are Army (including National Cadet Corps, Director General Quality Assurance, Military Farms and Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme), Navy (including Joint Staff), Air Force, Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Directorate of Ordnance (Coordination & Services). Grant Number 20 caters to revenue expenditure which includes expenditure on pay & allowances, transportation, revenue stores (like ordnance stores, ration, petrol, oil and lubricants, spares, maintenance of various platforms / equipments etc.), revenue works (which include maintenance of buildings, water and electricity charges, rents, rates and taxes, etc) and other miscellaneous expenditure. Grant Number 21 caters to Capital expenditure which includes expenditure on land, construction works, plant and machinery, equipment, heavy and medium vehicles, Naval Vessels, Aircraft and Aero engines, Dockyards, etc. Demand No. 22 provides for Pensionary charges {Service pension, gratuity, family pension, disability pension, commuted value of pension, leave encashment etc.} in respect of retired Defence personnel (including Defence civilian employees) of the three Services viz. Army, Navy and Air Force and also employees of erstwhile Ordnance Factories. The Committee learn that the total allocated budget for the Ministry of Defence for Financial Year 2023-24 is ₹ 5,93,537.64 Crore. Out of this amount, the largest share of 72.91 percent, i.e. ₹ 4,32,720.14 Crore has been allocated for Defence Services Estimates (Grant Number 20 and 21). An amount of ₹ 2,70,120.14 Crore has been allocated to Defence Services Revenue (Grant Number 20). The Capital Outlay on Defence Services (Grant number 21) has been allocated an amount of ₹ 1,62,600 Crore for the succeeding Financial Year. Defence Pensions (Grant Number 22) has secured 23.28 percent i.e. ₹ 1,38,205 Crore of the total Defence budget. The remaining 3.81 percent i.e. ₹ 22,612.50 Crore of the total Defence budget have been allocated to Ministry of Defence (Civil) (Grant Number 19).

Reply of the Government

This is factual information hence no comments are offered.

Projection and allocation under Defence Budget 2022-23:

Recommendation No. 2:

During examination of Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for 2023-24, the Committee observe that inspite of an increase of ₹ 68,371.49 Crore in total outlay for the Defence budget in 2023-24 in comparison to Budget Estimates in 2022-23, there is a shortfall of ₹ 43,575.87 Crore in the allocated Defence budget i.e. ₹ 5,93,537.64 Crore as compared to the projected amount of ₹ 6,37,113.51 Crore for Financial Year 2023-24. The Committee note the Ministry's submission in this regard that being a preliminary estimate, the projected Defence Budget has some margin in terms of calculations. This estimate is later rectified by the Ministry of Finance depending on the requirements of the Ministry. Further at the stage of budgetary discussion, the Ministry of Defence was informed that all its requirements were being met without any deduction. The Committee note that pursuant to their recommendation in their Twenty-sixth report (17th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for 2022-23 for pragmatic budgetary projections by the Ministry of Defence, the difference between projection and allocation in Defence Budget has reduced from approximately ₹ 1 lakh Crore in Budget Estimates 2022-23 to approximately ₹ 44,000 Crore in Budget Estimates 2023-24. The Committee also take cognizance of the fact that a country's budget caters to all sectors of the economy. Also, the procedure followed for allocation involves trend of expenditure, projections made, Committed Liabilities to be fulfilled etc. In this context, the Committee recommend that rigorous planning mechanism may be adopted and implemented by the Ministry of Defence for ensuring that the projected Defence budget is kept as close to actual requirements for a particular financial year. However, they are not averse for seeking supplementary grants at the subsequent stages to maintain the critical capabilities of the Forces at all times. It goes without saying that such supplementary grants whenever sought must take into consideration the unforeseen circumstances such as natural disasters, wars, inflationary impact etc., which may affect not only the domestic manufacturing and supplies but also the procurement from the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and International Suppliers. This point has further been dwelt upon in the succeeding paragraphs of this Report.

Reply of the Government

This Ministry submits the requirements projected by the Services/Organizations to Ministry of Finance for favourable consideration. While allocating funds, Ministry of Finance analyses past absorption capacity of the Services, pace of expenditure in the current Financial Year, overall resource envelope available and pressing demands from other quarters etc. Based on the overall ceilings conveyed by M/o Finance, Ministry of Defence allocates funds among the Services and Organisations under MoD taking into account Inter-Services priorities, pace of expenditure, pending committed liabilities etc.

2. Further, the Committee is apprised that Supplementary Grants are sought for specific purposes as and when need arises. Though, it may not be possible for the Ministry to seek additional funds through Supplementary Demand for Grants for unforeseen circumstances such as natural disasters, wars, inflationary impact etc., however, the same will be sought whenever such a situation arises. Also, if required, through reprioritization, it is ensured that urgent and critical capabilities are acquired without any compromise to operational preparedness of the Defence Services.

Growth of Defence Budget:

Recommendation No. 3:

The Committee learn that as per Economic Survey 2022-23, Consumer Price Index (CPI) in India went up to 7.8 percent in April, 2022 then declined around 5.7 percent by December, 2022. The monthly trend of inflation rates based on Wholesale Price Index (WPI), has been sliding downwards from its peak of 16.6 percent in May, 2022 to 10.6 per cent in September, 2022 and further to 5.0 percent in December, 2022. The Committee note that while the growth in Defence Budget in Revised Estimates 2022-23 over 2021-22 (Actuals) amounts to 16.80 percent, actual increase in Defence Budget at the stage of Revised Estimates 2022-23 over 2021- 22 (Actuals) amounts to 11.10 percent after adjusting provisional inflation rate of 5.70 percent. The Committee also note from the Defence Secretary's deposition in this regard that salary and pension estimates for FY 2023-24 may not vary much unless there is huge inflation. The Committee, in order to gauge the growth in Defence budget vis a vis actual inflation, desire that information regarding increase in Defence Budget after adjusting actual inflation rate for FY 2022-23 may be furnished at the time of submitting Action Taken Replies by the Ministry. Nevertheless, they recommend that factoring in the expected rise in inflation, the additional funds sought by the Ministry of Defence at the Revised Estimates stage in Financial Year 2023-24 should be allocated in order to cater to modernization and acquisition plans of the Services and other Departments/Organisations under the ambit of the Ministry of Defence.

Reply of the Government

In RE 2022-23, against projected requirement of Rs. 5,92,689.40 Crore, an allocation of Rs. 5,84,791.10 Crore has been made to M/o Defence (all 4 Grants) i.e. 98.67% of projected requirement. This allocation reflects increase of Rs. 84,110.22 Crore (16.80%) over the expenditure incurred in FY 2021-22 i.e. Rs. 5,00,680.88 Crore. As per Monthly Economic Review (March, 2023), available on D/o Economic Affairs, M/o Finance's website, CPI inflation for FY 2022-23 stands at 6.7%. Therefore, after adjusting the inflation, the increase in MoD's budget in RE 2022-23 (over Actuals 2021-22) had been 10.10%, which is considered to be sufficient.

2. Further, the Committee is also be apprised that Services, while projecting fund requirements, take into account various factors such as inflation, exchange rate variations, pending committed liabilities, new schemes likely to be fructified etc. The funds projected by Services are examined and forwarded for favorable consideration of Ministry of Finance. Further, it may also be added that modernization and acquisition plans of the Services/ Organisations proceed as planned and on the basis of additional requirements, funds are sought at Supplementary/RE stage. Also, if required, through reprioritization, it is ensured that urgent and critical capabilities are acquired without any compromise to operational preparedness of the Defence Services.

Expenditure on Research & Development (R&D)

Recommendation No. 5:

The Committee learn that Capital allocation of Defence Services for FY 2023-24 is Rs 1,62,600 crore. This head has seen a jump of Rs 10,230 crore i.e. 6.7 percent over FY 2022-23. The allocation to Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO) has been enhanced by 9 percent to Rs 23,264 crore for BE 2023-24. Further, 75 percent of Defence Capital procurement budget has been earmarked for domestic industry in FY 2023-24. In this regard, the Ministry has submitted that apart from allocation to DRDO, to strengthen the Defence Industrial eco-system in the country, Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS) allocations have been enhanced to Rs 116 crore and Rs 45 crore, respectively. It was also brought to the notice of the Committee that research and development do not require astronomical amount at one go. It was also assured that no R&D project will be allowed to languish for lack of budgetary support.

The Committee, on scrutiny of the documents provided by the Ministry of Defence in connection with examination of Demands for Grants for the year 2023-24, observe that the actual expenditure on R&D in 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 amounted to Rs 17,779.24 crore against BE allocation of Rs 19,421.02 crore, Rs 16,075.07 crore against BE allocation of Rs 19,627.35 crore and Rs 18,669.66 crore against BE allocation of Rs 20,757.44 crore, respectively. The Committee are of the considered view that in the competitive Defence field, our nation has to be self-reliant for inventing, developing and producing cutting edge Defence technology. Moreover, the private Defence industry is in a nascent stage in our country and is not in a position to spend huge sum on research and development and come out with very critical and protected technologies which could be adapted by our manufacturing sector. Therefore, in order to equip our Forces with State-of-the-Art Defence technology, the Committee recommend that stringent mechanism to ensure full and prudent utilisation of the funds allocated for Defence Research & Development may be instituted by the Ministry. Further, the figures regarding allocated amount at Revised Estimates stage and actual expenditure incurred on R&D including those of iDEX and DTIS and other related schemes for Financial Year 2022-23 may be intimated to the Committee within one month of the presentation of this Report.

Reply of the Government

Details of Budget Estimates for the DDR&D at different Budgetary stages sanctioned and actual expenditure since 2019 is as under:

(Rs in Cr)

YEAR	BE APPROVED	RE APPROVED	MA APPROVED	ACTUALS
2019-2020	19021.02	17730.78	17730.78	17375.13
2020-2021	19327.35	16466.29	16145.74	15706.96
2021-2022	20457.44	18337.44	18720.44	18290.99
2022-2023	21330.20	21130.20	21130.20	20584.58

Details of Budget Estimates for the Department of Defence Production (w.r.t. IDEX& DTIS) for the year 2022-23:

(Rs in Cr)

YEAR	Title	BE ALLOCATION	RE ALLOCATION	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE
2022-23	Grant in Aid General Innovation for Defence Excellence (IDEX)	60.00	78.00	78.00
	Grants for Creation of Capital Assets Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS)	23.43	5.43	

Government has taken adequate steps to make the country self-reliant by developing indigenous advanced technologies and complex systems. Following are the initiatives/ steps taken by Government for indigenization of manufacturing of technology intensive defence equipments and weapons and for creating a domestic defence production eco-system:

- Defence Acquisition procedure (DAP 2020) is promulgated to maximize acquisition of defence equipment through indigenous sources and promote domestic manufacturing. Govt. has ensured that the most preferred option for capital acquisition is 'Buy Indigenous Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM)' category equipment followed by 'Buy (Indian)' category. The 'Make' categories aim to achieve the objective of self-reliance by involving greater participation of Indian industrial eco-system including private sector.
- The provisions of Govt. funding have been introduced for Make-I, TDF and IDEX projects. Technology Development Fund (TDF) Scheme executed by DRDO supports indigenous development of components, products, systems and technologies by MSMEs and Start-ups. Funding under TDF scheme was enhanced from Rs 10 Cr to Rs 50 Cr per Project, and the same under IDEX Prime scheme has been enhanced from Rs. 1.5 Cr to Rs. 10 Cr. It will give further boost the vision of 'Aatmanirbharta in Defence'.
- Four 'Positive Indigenization Lists' of defence equipments and platforms for which there would be an embargo on the import.
- The 'Development cum Production Partner (DcPP)' model of DRDO is implemented where-in Industry is taken up as DcPP in system development projects. Both development and production units are manufactured by industry along with life cycle support.
- DRDO test facilities have been opened to the industries for utilization. The test facilities have been listed on DRDO website and have been communicated to them. The facilities are being utilized by the industries.

- Two Defence Industrial Corridors have been set up in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu to catalyze indigenous production of defence and aerospace related items.
- Defence R&D has been opened up for industry, start-ups and academia with 25% of defence R&D budget earmarked for the purpose. This is being implemented through various existing schemes and new schemes have been proposed.
- In order to promote indigenous design and manufacturing, funds have also been earmarked for procurement from indigenous sources. For the FY 2023-24, funds have been earmarked in the ratio 67.75:32.25 between Domestic and Foreign procurement in the Capital Acquisition Budget of the Ministry of Defence (MoD). In addition, the MoD has also directed for spending an amount of Rs. 1500 Cr. towards procurement from Start-ups.
- Nil Transfer of Technology (ToT) fees are being charged from DcPPs /PAs/ LSI.
- Industries have been provided with free access for DRDO patents.
- Lists of systems which will be developed by 'industry only' have been identified by DRDO. The same have been promulgated by MoD. DRDO will not develop such systems.
- DRDO is skilling youth (Internships, apprenticeship, electives in B.Tech, M.Tech courses) to make ready for Defence industry.

Modern warfare

Recommendation No. 6:

The Committee are cognizant that the world is witnessing a shift in the strategy of warfare where small arms / weapons are proving to be more lethal and potent than bigger platforms in certain areas. The Committee learn that programme for weaponization of drones is ongoing in the country and certain degree of success has been achieved in this field. Taking into account this paradigm shift in threat perception, the Committee recommend that synergized efforts by DRDO and the Services may be made on war footing mode to develop and adopt these small and potent arms / equipment so that combat readiness of our Forces is commensurate with hybrid and modern war tactics. In regard to the drone capabilities, the Committee would highlight whether by DRDO or by private sector specialized drones such as Anti Drone / Interceptive Drone / Combat Drone / Sea Drone etc should be developed with a fast pace so that we are not left behind in this area. In another context, the Committee would like to know in general the developments, if any, in regard to Jetpack suits to be used by the Army Personnel in future warfare.

Reply of the Government

DRDO has designed and developed Multicopter / Drones with high endurance. These developments have been carried out anticipating the future requirements by the Armed Forces. These Multicopter / Drones can be weaponised and can also be used for logistic usages.

DRDO is making various drone based systems and anti-drone systems based on the requirements of User Agencies. DRDO has developed a comprehensive integrated Anti-Drone System which comprises of detection, identification and neutralization (both Hard Kill and Soft Kill) of a drone. The solutions can be customised for different challenges. Three services (IA, IAF & IN) have already placed 23 orders on industry for manufacturing of this Anti-Drone System developed by DRDO.

DRDO has taken up a feasibility study to demonstrate wearable human flight platform, utilizing battery driven Electric Ducted Fans (EDFs). The prototype of the same is under development. EDFs are the alternative to the micro gas turbine (Jet Engine) used in the Jetpack suit by other countries.

Manpower

Recommendation No. 7:

The Committee, through oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Defence, learn that the Armed Forces are undergoing a phase where there is slight reduction in manpower as a result of COVID. Further, Agnipath scheme has been introduced in 2022 as recruitment scheme for youth to serve in the Armed Forces. The roadmap under Agnipath scheme is recruitment of 40,000 soldiers next year; and 45,000 and 50,000 in the subsequent years. Also, based on operational requirements, the Defence Minister is empowered to increase the number of recruited Agniveers. The Committee, in this regard, recommend that efforts for recruitment of Agniveers in the Forces may now be intensified so that combat capabilities of the Armed Forces on the ground are not negatively affected due to COVID. They also recommend that a pool of Agniveers, apart from the ones absorbed as regular cadre in the Forces, may be kept ready to serve the nation in times of any eventuality.

Reply of the Government

‘Classified’

Agnipath scheme

Recommendation No. 8:

Agnipath scheme has been introduced in 2022 as recruitment scheme for youth to serve in the Armed Forces. The Committee have been informed that new minor head of Agnipath scheme have been introduced under provision of Army, Navy and Air Force which will cater to the pay and allowances, contribution towards their Sewa Nidhi Fund, insurance cover, ex-gratia payment to Agniveers. Union Budget 2023-24 has provided exempt-exempt-exempt status for income tax purposes to the Agniveer Fund. An amount of ₹ 453 crore in RE of 2022-23 and ₹ 4,266 crore in BE 2023-24 has been provided to cater to training aids and simulators. The Committee note that training of the first batch of Agniveers has commenced, however, the calculation regarding estimated savings on account of 87 rolling out of Agnipath scheme has not yet been quantified as the scheme has started in 2022. In a written reply, the Ministry has submitted that the scheme is not an expenditure controlling exercise. In this context, the Committee recommend that as the aim of the Scheme is to ensure selection of young and agile manpower, adequate allocation for training aids, pay and allowances for Agniveers may be accorded priority. They also desire that

chief differences in the training modules of the soldiers recruited through previous and new Agnipath scheme may be furnished at the time of furnishing Action Taken Replies.

Reply of the Government

‘Classified’

Incidents of espionage in the Forces

Recommendation No.9:

The Committee are aware that cases of espionage have been reported in the Armed Forces and allied Organisations/Departments. In this regard, the Committee recommend that the extant system of detecting and monitoring espionage cases may be further strengthened to avoid recurrence of such cases. Further, the Officers and Jawans may also be regularly sensitized in this regard. The details of such cases detected in the Services and allied Organisations/Departments in the past three years and action taken thereon may be intimated to the Committee within three months of the presentation of this report.

Reply of the Government

Indian Army: Measures against espionage have been strengthened and service personnel are regularly being educated on the modus-operandi of Foreign Intelligence Operatives. All reported suspected espionage (spying) cases are investigated as per Standard Operating Procedure for suspected espionage cases issued by Military Intelligence Directorate, Integrated Headquarters Ministry of Defence (Army). Counter Intelligence Units of the Army have further heightened the counter intelligence mechanism.

Over last three years i.e. from year 2020 to 2023 (till date). A total of 11 service personnel have been arrested by police wherein the cases are now subjudice. In addition, two service personnel have been punished by the Army. The year wise details are as under:-

Sl. No.	Year	Number of Service Personnel involved in suspected espionage cases
(a)	2020	04
(b)	2021	07
(c)	2022	02
(d)	2023	Nil
	Total	13

Indian Navy: There have been no cases of espionage per-se in the Indian Navy in the past three years. However, a few cases of communication of IN personnel through social media, by suspicious identities, have come to light since December, 2019. Eleven personnel were found to have been approached by such suspicious identities. Investigation/trial are in progress on these individuals. The pattern and modus operandi of personnel getting entrapped were analysed while investigating these cases. It has been observed that the personnel were misled by entities

operating social media accounts under pseudo identities of Indian women. Personnel were enticed to disclose information inadvertently; resulting from their injudicious presence on social media. The Indian Navy has taken suitable measures to sensitize personnel at all levels about the threats emanating from online/virtual interaction with unverified personnel. The measures include issue of regular advisories and interaction of senior officers with personnel at all levels apprising them of Do's & Don'ts with regards to handing of information.

Indian Air Force: Advisories are issued from time to time to caution IAF personnel to refrain themselves from getting honey trapped and temptations offered by unknown persons. Further, following actions regarding cyber security have been taken in this regard:-

- (a) A policy on 'Cyber Security and Usage of Social Media was formulated and disseminated in the environment, the policy severely restricts the use of smartphones in work places and usage of social media.
- (b) Frequent checks are being conducted to ensure compliance of the policy.
- (c) Awareness campaign/lectures on Cyber Security and Modus Operandi of PIOs are being conducted to sensitize the personnel.
- (d) **Espionage Cases in Last Three Years in the IAF.** Two cases have surfaced in the last three years.
- (e) **Action Taken.** One of the involved personnel has been dismissed from IAF and handed over to civil police. He is currently undergoing trial in a civil court Department. Inquiry into the second case is under finalization for initiating appropriate action against the individual.

HQ IDS: An espionage racket run by PAK ISI resident agents was unearthed in July, 2021 based on intelligence inputs. A Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO), cultivated by a Pak Intelligence Operative, had compromised the information through unauthorized access. Investigations on links and espionage aspects were progressed by Delhi Police, Crime Branch in close coordination with Army.

Action Taken:

- (a) Court of Inquiry ordered by HQ IDS found the NCO guilty and the NCO is presently in civil custody.
- (b) Suitable security measures have been put in place and enhanced in the concerned organization and advisories have been issued to all concerned.
- (c) Administrative action has also been taken against concerned individuals of the organization for oversight/lapse.

BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION

Budgetary Allocation to BRO

Recommendation Nos. 10 & 11:

10. The Committee note that for 2022-23, the final allotment to Border Roads Organization under Ministry of Defence (Civil) was ₹9,369.50 crore and the expenditure upto December 2022 was ₹ 6,934.86 crore. For Budget Estimates (BE)2023-24, under MoD(Civil), allocation under Capital Budget is ₹ 5,012 crore and under Revenue Budget is ₹ 5,167.75 crore. The Committee

have been apprised that Capital Budget of BRO has been increased by 42 percent to ₹ 5,012 crore in FY2023-24 as against ₹ 3,536 crore in BE 2022-23. They also have been apprised that the objective of BRO for 2023-24 is construction of 176 projects which will cost approximately ₹ 6,377 crore.

11. Taking into account the role of BRO in developing and maintaining strategic infrastructure in Border Areas, prudent consumption of allocated funds by BRO and expected increase in cost of construction material, the Committee recommend that additional funds at Revised Estimates stage, as sought, should be allocated to BRO so that the execution of works of construction and maintaining operational infrastructure for the Forces in Border Areas continue unhampered.

Reply of the Government

This Ministry submits the requirement projected by the Departments, including Border Roads Organisation, to Ministry of Finance for favorable consideration. While allocating funds, Ministry of Finance analyses past absorption capacity of the Organizations, pace of expenditure in the current Financial Year, overall resource envelope available and pressing demands from other quarters etc. Based on the overall ceiling conveyed by M/o Finance, Ministry of Defence allocates funds among the Departments and Organization of MoD, including Border Roads Organisation, taking into account inter-Organizations priorities, pace of expenditure, pending committed liabilities etc.

2. The committee is assured that all efforts will be made to obtain additional funds projected by Border Roads Organization at Supplementary/RE stage under Revenue and Capital head. Further, the allocated funds will be optimally utilized towards operational activities. If required, the schemes will be reprioritized to ensure that urgent and critical capabilities are required without any compromise to operational preparedness.

Challenges faced in execution of projects and maintenance of roads

Recommendation Nos. 12-14:

The committee are given to understand that inhospitable areas, delay in Forest and Wildlife clearance, limited working window due climactic conditions and delay in land acquisition are some of the challenges being faced by BRO in execution of projects and maintenance of roads. As regards the issue of delay in Forest and Wildlife clearance and land acquisition, the Ministry submitted that State-level committees have been 'formed' for resolution of these issues and work is ongoing in this regard. The Committee desire that details regarding frequency of meetings by these committees, the outcome of the same and a percentile in a tabular form that how many issues were sent to these Committees and proportionately what is the number of resolution/outcome of such issues in the past two years alongwith final outcome of such meetings may be furnished within three month of the presentation of this Report.

Reply of the Government

For resolution of pending Forest and Wild Life Clearance meeting on regular basis has been carried out by various Committee. MoEF & CC is convening Fortnightly Regional coordination meetings (FRCM) at its Integrated Regional offices under the chairmanship of DDG (Forest) with concerned user agency and State Nodal Officers for resolution of pending Forest Clearance cases. State Board Wild Life (SBWL) also conducts regular meeting for resolution of pending cases of Wildlife clearance. The details of number of meetings held, cases approved and percentage of cases resolved are enclosed in **Annexure-I**.

Further, JS (BR) has been nominated as nodal officer to coordinate with Inspector General, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoE F & CC) regarding pending Forest Clearance & Wildlife Clearance (FC&WL) cases. In this regard, a meeting was convened on 27.04.2023 with officials of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoE F & CC). Pending cases has been submitted to MoEF & CC for monitoring with IRO Units.

Recommendation No. 13:

During examination of Demand for Grants for 2023-24, the Committee desired written information regarding the specific cases/projects of the BRO which are being delayed due to pending clearances and their current position. Till the date of finalization of this Report, the requisite information as assured by the Ministry of Defence has not been received. The Committee would now like the information to be furnished forthwith and in any case, at the time of furnishing Action Taken replies. Also, the Committee recommended that in order to save time and energy of BRO in getting the approvals and factoring in their strategic role in the operation preparedness of the Forces, exemption may be provided to BRO, especially in forward areas, from seeking Forest and wildlife clearances.

Reply of the Government

Specific cases/Projects of BRO which are delayed due to pending forest clearance and wildlife cases and their current position is attached as per **Annexure-II**.

Further, Central Government through introduction of 'The Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023' has sought exemption of forest land falling within a distance of 100 km along International borders/LAC/LOC from the provision of this Act for construction of strategic linear projects of national importance and concerning national security.

Recommendation No. 14:

A specific case of pending permission for mining in Kashmir division which was providing to be hindrance in execution of projects by BRO was brought to the notice of the Committee. It has been reported that in order to ensure smooth supply of minor minerals for the development projects being executed across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the timeline for grant of short term permit or disposal permit till 30 Jun 2023, by carrying out changes in the relevant rules has been extended. The Committee recommended that on similar lines, project-wise permission may be granted to BRO to carry out infrastructural work in J&K. If necessary, the

issues may be taken up with the Administration of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir by the highest level in the Ministry of Defence under intimation to the Committee”.

Reply of the Government

The following cases are pending for permission for minor minerals for development projects under BRO in UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

- (i) Geology & Mining Office, Bandipura - 06 Cases.
 - (ii) District Mining Office, Kupwara - 05 Cases.
 - (iii) District Mining Office, Ganderbal - 05 Cases.
- (Details are attached as per **Annexure-III**)

State/respective Civil Administration have been approached by BRO for grant of permission for mining of mineral aggregates. Issue will be taken up with Administration of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir by Ministry of Defence under intimation to the Committee, if these cases are not resolved.

Safety parameters and features in infrastructure built by BRO.

Recommendations Nos. 15-16:

The Committee have been informed that Indian Roads Congress (IRC) code is followed by BRO for construction of roads and all norms regarding quality and safety are adhered to by BRO. Further, while construction of tunnels, all safety requirements are adhered to as per the international norms which include constructing escape tunnel for any tunnel longer than 1.5 Km. BRO has also conducted audit of all roads constructed by it. Keeping in view the recent land subsidence incident in Joshimath, Uttarakhand, the Committee recommend that audit of infrastructure other than roads such as tunnels, bridges, airfields etc. built by BRO may also be carried out, especially in geologically sensitive areas. They also recommend that all requisite information such as geological surveys may be collected by BRO for undertaking construction work in geologically sensitive areas to obviate any chances of damage in adjoining areas. Such audit as is stated above, must include the accidents, if any, which took place like damage to water, lenses etc, amongst others.

Reply of the Government

It is intimated that audit of Tunnels, Bridges and Airfield are also being carried out by BRO. Health audit of bridges in BRO is being carried out as per IRC SP-18, IRC SP-35, IRC SP-52 and DGBR TI No.20 by CE's (P). Regular inspection of all Pmt/Temporary bridges are also being undertaken as per DGBR TI No.20.

Collection of geological survey data is mandatory in the DPR's of works being undertaken on EPC mode. Extensive measures are being taken by BRO towards this in terms of construction of breast walls, lined drain, culverts, slope stabilization measures, slide treatment works etc. Instructions are being issued for collection of requisite information such as geological surveys for undertaking construction work in geologically sensitive areas to obviate damages in adjoining areas.

Labour deployed by BRO

Recommendations Nos. 16-17:

The Committee are given to understand that approximately 70 percent of BRO's labour force hails from Dumka in Jharkhand and remaining 30 percent is local labour. During the period of prevalence of COVID-19, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by BRO with Jharkhand Government for engagement of casual paid labourers. In this regard, the Ministry during oral evidence clarified that signing such MoU is not a standard practice in BRO and the MoU was a special arrangement during COVID times. Considering the contribution of the labour force from Dumka, Jharkhand during COVID times, the Committee, in this context, recommend that even if the said MoU has expired being a one-time arrangement, priority must be accorded to provide best, to the extent possible, working conditions for labour force deployed by BRO. Further, grant for conducting some welfare activities in Dumka, Jharkhand may be provided by the Ministry of Defence taking into account that the major percentage of labour force deployed by BRO is sourced from this region.

Reply of the Government

It is intimated that labour in UT of Ladakh are being inducted from Dumka, Jharkhand. All facilities like free accommodation, drinking water, heating arrangement, conveyance, arrangement of toilets, clothing including winter clothing are being provided to them in Ladakh.

BRO is committed to look after the welfare of CPL employees since they are the major contributors in term of work force of the organization.

Recommendation No. 17:

The Committee during examination of DFG 2019-20 had raised the issue of lack of mobile banking facilities available to the workforce of Border Roads Organisation, who have to work in very remote and high altitudes areas. There are obviously no branches of banks in these pristine lands where the construction of new roads is undertaken and the workers find it very difficult to transfer money to their families. In this regard, the representative of BRO had apprised that provision of facility of mobile ATM twice or thrice in a month for such workers was being contemplated. The Committee would like to know the progress made in this regard and if no development has taken place the reasons thereof may be intimated to the Committee.

Reply of the Government

Feasibility of mobile ATMs is being examined. However, for labours deployed in remote areas, conveyance is being provided by BRO to nearest available ATM so that they can do the necessary transactions.

Recommendation No. 18:

Tourism and self-employment opportunities in Ladakh.

The Committee learn that in order to provide conducive and secure transit of tourists on the roads built by BRO in Northern and Eastern borders, establishment of 75 BRO Cafes in 12 Border States including UT of Ladakh has been undertaken by BRO in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. In this regard, the Committee recommend that with a view to generate more self-employment opportunities in Ladakh, coordination with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs may also be considered by the Ministry of Defence so as to enable the Tribals of the areas to gainfully engage in tourism service related industry. Since these Cafes are already functional and initially if they do not make profits then emphasis should be made that they run cost plus basis.

Reply of the Government

It is intimated these 75 BRO Cafes are based on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode, through competitive bid process. Tendering action for 13 Nos café has been completed. Out of which, letters of acceptance (LoA) for 10 Nos café have been issued and three are under consideration. One café in Uttarakhand is already functional.

Objective of BRO Cafés is to facilitate tourism in these remote areas complementing the connectivity established through BRO's roads. The tourism activity will also generate jobs for the tribals of the areas concerned.

INDIAN COAST GUARD

Recommendations Nos. 19 & 20:

19. The Committee learn that the amount allocated under Capital and Revenue heads to Indian Coast Guard Organisation (ICG) in Budget Estimates (BE) 2023-24 is ₹ 3,536 crore and ₹ 3,661.47 crore, respectively. Till 6.2.23, out of the allocated amount of ₹ 3,300 crore under Capital budget at Revised Estimates (RE) stage in 2022-23, ₹ 2,351.3232 crore have been utilized. Under Revenue budget allocated for RE 2022-23, an amount of ₹ 2,865.26 crore has been utilized against the allocation of ₹ 3,998.33 crore. Keeping in view the past trend of utilization of funds by ICG, in Committee's opinion, the allocations are adequate to cater to ICG's requirements for FY 2023-24.

20. The committee, after analyzing the data of budgetary allocation in 2022-23, find that unlike the trend of preceding years, the RE allocation of ICG under Capital budget in 2022-23 was reduced to ₹ 3300 crore from BE allocation of ₹ 4,246.37 crore. This amounts to reduction of approximately 22 percent. Considering that Capital head of the Budget caters for acquisition of platforms/equipment/weapons and expenditure on Land and Capital works, the Committee desire that reasons for this reduction at the time of furnishing the Action Taken Replies may be provided to them. They also recommend that prudent budgetary planning mechanism may be adopted while projecting and allocating funds for ICG at the BE stage itself so that funds are not later reduced at RE stage and the requisite funds are made available to other Organisation/Department under Ministry of Defence in timely manner.

Reply of the Government

The provision of Rs. 4246.37 crore under Capital Section of ICG was made keeping in view of the new scheme projected. However, the same could not be materialized on time. Hence, the requirement of funds during the fiscal year was reduced to Rs. 3300.00 crore at RE 2022-23 stage.

2. This Ministry issued instruction to all the user Departments to carry out utmost caution and accuracy to ensure while estimating requirement of funds for RE-2022-23 and BE 2023-24 after taking into account all the instructions issued by Ministry of Finance from time to time and adherence to the expenditure control during the current/ensuing financial year as well.

Manpower

Recommendation No. 21:

The Committee learn that at present, borne strength in the categories of Officers, Enrolled Personnel and Civilians in ICG is 1765, 11584 and 1454, respectively. The Committee observe that the charter of ICG includes inter alia ensuring the safety and protection of the artificial islands, offshore terminals, installation and other structures and devices in any maritime zone, preserve and protect the Marine Environment, and assisting the Customs and other authorities in Anti-Smuggling Operations. Keeping in view the multifarious roles and responsibilities of Coast Guard, the Committee recommend that concerted efforts be undertaken for recruitment of additional manpower which will prove to be operational investment for ICG.

Reply of the Government

Concerted efforts are being undertaken for recruitment of additional manpower in the categories of Officers, Enrolled Personnel and Civilians in Indian Coast Guard. Recruitment of Officers & Enrolled Personnel is being undertaken as per the availability of vacancy and taking into consideration availability of training faculty of Indian Navy (IN).

Anti-Drug Trafficking Operations

Recommendation No. 22:

The Committee learn that in joint operations with other drug law enforcement agencies, ICG has recovered huge consignment of drugs in last two years. The Committee, during oral evidence in connection with examination of Demands for Grants for 2023-24, desired information regarding value of drugs recovered by ICG in 2021 and 2022. The requisite information, till date of finalization of the Report, is still awaited. In the absence of the additional information with them, the Committee are not in a position to give any conclusive recommendation but desire that the information sought by the Committee may invariably be furnished within the time frame. On this point, they now expect that the additional information may be furnished to them with the Action Taken Replies.

Reply of the Government

1. The details of narcotics seizures during 2021 & 2022 are as follows:-

Sl. No	Date of Seizure	Narcotics	Organisation involved	Location	Action Taken	Qty (Kgs)	Approx Value (Rs. inCr)
1.	04 Jan 21	Charas	ICG	Nirani Creak Gujarat	Handed over to Marine Police Kutch, Gujarat	01.00	0.10
2.	12 Jan 21	Ganja	ICG	Off Mandapam Tamil Nadu	Handed over to Custom, Mandapam, Tami Nadu	154.00	0.30
3.	18 Mar 21	Heroin	ICG	Off Minicoy Island	Handed over to NCB, Vizhinjam, Kerala	300.00	3000.00
4.	14 Apr 21	Heroin	Joint Operation between ICG & ATS Gujarat	Off Gujarat Coast	Case handed over to ATS Gujarat	30.00	300.00
5.	06 Jul 21	Charas	ICG	Godia creek Kutch, Gujarat	Handed over to Marine Police Kutch, Gujarat	21.40	2.14
6.	19 Sep 21	Heroin	Joint Operation between ICG & ATS Gujarat	Off Gujarat Coast	Case handed over to ATS Gujarat	30.00	250.00
7.	20 Dec 21	Heroin	Joint Operation between ICG & ATS Gujarat	Off Gujarat Coast	Case handed over to ATS Gujarat	77.00	400.00
8.	25 Apr 22	Heroin	Joint Operation between ICG & ATS Gujarat	Off Jakhau	Handed over to ATS Gujarat	56.00	280.00

9.	18 May 22	Heroin	Joint operation between ICG and DRI	Off Lakshadweep Island	Handed over to DRI Kochi	218.00	1526.00
10	31 May 22	Heroin	ICG	Off Jakhau	Handed over to ATS Gujarat	50.00	250.00
11	26 Jul 22	Marijuana Cannabis (Ganja)	ICG	3 rd Island, Mandapam	Handed over to Customs, Mandapam, Tamil Nadu	56.78	0.10
12	27 Jul 22	Marijuana Cannabis (Ganja)	ICG	3 rd Island, Mandapam	Handed over to Customs, Mandapam	74.77	0.14
13	14 Sep 22	Heroin	Joint Operation between ICG & ATS Gujarat	Off Mitha Port Lt	Handed over to ATS Gujarat	40.00	200.00
14	08 Oct 22	Heroin	Joint Operation between ICG & ATS Gujarat	Off Mitha Port Lt	Handed over to ATS Gujarat	50.00	350.00
15	21 Nov 22	Ganja	ICG	Off Mandapam	Handed over to NCB, Chennai	300.00	1.30
		Hashish				0.50	
16	26 Dec 22	Heroin	Joint Operation between ICG & ATS Gujarat	Off Jakhau	Handed over to ATS Gujarat	40.00	300.00
Total						1499.45	6860.08

Marine Police

Recommendation No. 23:

The Committee note that currently, a three-tier coastal security apparatus exists comprising of Marine Police, Coast Guard and Indian Navy. Indian Navy is responsible for overall Maritime Security which includes coastal and offshore security. Indian Coast Guard has been additionally designated as authority responsible for coastal security in India's territorial waters including areas patrolled by the Marine Police. The Committee have been apprised that Marine Police in certain States have been encountering challenges such as inadequate budget and equipment such as patrol vessels. In this regard, the Committee desire that details of Marine

Police stations in the country, structure, functioning, sanctioned vis a vis held strength of manpower and equipment/ resources, allocated and utilized budget for the past three years may be furnished within three months of the presentation of this Report. The Committee also recommend that steps may be taken by all stakeholders for increased coordination and regular training programmes and exercises of Marine Police with other maritime security and law enforcement agencies.

Reply of the Government

1. There are total 204 Coastal Police Stations in all Coastal States/UTs.
2. To enhance coordination and for strengthening Coastal Security mechanism, ICG has been undertaking various initiatives viz. **Coastal Security Operations, Coastal Security Exercises, monthly security drill 'Sajag' and Joint Coastal Patrol in coordination with other maritime stakeholders.**
3. As per the inputs received from MHA (Department of Border Management) the details pertaining to structure, functioning and strength of manpower and equipment resources alongwith budget allocation for last three years in respect of Marine Police Station are as under:-
 - (i) Details of Marine Police Stations in the country, its structure and functioning
Police primarily belong to the 'State list' of the constitution and therefore policing and various police matters fall into the jurisdiction of the respective State Governments. Article 246 of the Constitution of India designates the police as a State subject, which means that the State Governments frame the rules and regulations that govern each police force. 'Police' and 'Public Order' are the State subject under the 7th Schedule of the Constitution of India and therefore, it is the primary duty of the State Governments to prevent detect, register and investigate crime and prosecute the criminals.
 - (a) Structure:- Different States and UTs exercise different structures. Some states have come out with order that a CSPs (Coastal State Police) will have 14 personnel including 01 Inspector, 01 Sub-Inspector, 02 Head Constable, 03 Technical Personnel (02 Engine Driver & 01 Laskar), 05 Constable and 02 Drivers. However, due to shortage of manpower implementation was being done by States/ UTs. The jurisdiction manpower varies between 08-11 personnel in actual for Coastal Police Stations. Further, some of the states like Odisha, Tamil Nadu have supplemented Marine police with Home Guards.
 - (b) Functioning:- The CSPS (Coastal State Police Station)/MPS (Marine Police Station) have jurisdiction of 12 NM from the baseline which due to limitation of Coastal Police Station (CPS) sea going capabilities CPS have been tasked to patrol upto 05 NM from coastline. Besides, all states have given some land jurisdiction to Coastal Police like Fish Landing Centres, Jetties, Fishing harbours, Fishing hamlets and critical infrastructure on coast barring three states namely Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Goa. These states have Coastal Police exclusive jurisdiction on territorial waters.

(c) Coastal Police Stations:- The Coastal Police Station in the country are as follows:-

Sl No.	Name of State/ UT	Coastal Police Stations
1.	Gujarat	22
2.	Maharashtra	19
3.	Goa	7
4.	Karnataka	9
5.	Kerala	18
6.	Tamil Nadu	42
7.	Andhra Pradesh	21
8.	Odisha	18
9.	West Bengal	14
10.	Daman & Diu	3
11.	Puducherry	7
12.	Lakshadweep	7
13.	A & N Islands	20
Total		204

(ii) Sanction vis-à-vis held strength of manpower. Different States/ UTs have different manpower sanction of marine police. Gujarat has a sanction of 1100 coastal police personnel whereas they have actual 900 coastal police personnel borne. Similarly, Maharashtra has a sanction of 1200 coastal police personnel, Tamil Nadu has a sanction of 616 Coastal Security Group Police Personnel and a sanction of 300 Home Guards for Coastal Security Group, Odisha has sanction of 1018 coastal police personnel and a sanction of 270 Home Guards for supporting Coastal Security Police Stations. The details of Marine police personnel borne with different States and UTs, as per data available with MHA is as under:-

Sl No.	Name of State/ UT	Manpower Sanctioned	Present Strength
1.	Gujarat	1109	834
2.	Maharashtra	4427	2316
3.	Goa	444	179
4.	Karnataka	543	328
5.	Kerala	692	583
6.	Tamil Nadu	652	410
7.	Andhra Pradesh	1504	599
8.	Odisha	1288	560
9.	West Bengal	649	276 + (981- Village police/ Civil volunteer force)
10.	Daman & Diu	174	144
11.	Puducherry	146	85
12.	Lakshadweep	224	76
13.	A & N Islands	286	238
Total		12078	7465

(iii) Equipment/ resources, allocation and utilized budget for the past 3 years. Under the Coastal Security Scheme, implemented in phases the Coastal states/ UTs have been provided with 204 Coastal Police Stations, 10 Maritime Police Operation Centres, 60 Jetties 97 check posts, 58 outposts, 30 barracks, 204 boats, 284 four wheelers and 554 two wheelers. Phase-I & II of the scheme were implemented during 2005-2011 (with total financial outlay of Rs. 646 crore) and during 2011-2020 (with a total financial outlay of Rs. 1579.91 crore) respectively. Under the scheme each Coastal Police Station had been allocated Rs. 10 lakhs and Rs. 15 lakhs under the CSS Phase-I and Phase-II respectively for the procurement of navigational/ communication equipment, night vision devices, computers etc. Additionally, 10 rubber inflated boats were also acquired for Goa. Under the CSS, the concerned Coastal States/ UTs were provided financial assistances, boats and assistance for training. The recurring expenditure towards reimbursement of fuel cost upto 31 March, 2020 was reimbursed by MHA. Besides these, Tamil Nadu also acquired 24 All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) separately.

4. ICG has trained a total of 4919 Marine Police Personnel since 2006.

DEFENCE ESTATES ORGANISATION:

Budgetary Provision

Recommendations Nos 24-25

The Committee learn that for Directorate General Defence Estates (DGDE), under Budget Estimates 2023-24, ₹ 620.05 crore and ₹ 42.65 crore have been allocated under Revenue and Capital Head, respectively. The Committee, while scrutinizing the data supplied by the Ministry, find that there is reduction in the amount allocated for Capital budget to DGDE from BE 2022-23 to RE 2022-23 i.e. ₹ 173.03 crore to ₹ 48.50 crore. The Committee would like to be apprised of the reasons for this reduction of approximately ₹ 120 crore from BE 2022-23 to RE 2022-23 under Capital Head. In this regard, the Committee recommend that sound and prudent principles of financial planning be strictly adhered to by the Ministry so that there is no marked deviation in allocation of funds at RE stage.

The Committee learn that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) provides financial assistance to Cantonment Boards in the form of ordinary Grant-in-Aid to balance their budget. During 2021-22, 49 Cantonment Boards out of 62 received Grant-in-Aid from the MoD. Apart from ordinary grant-in-aid, grants for creation of capital assets like under-ground sewerage system, water supply schemes, construction of hospitals and schools etc. are also being provided from the year 2012-13 onwards. The Committee find that for BE 2023-24, the total Grant-in-Aid to the Cantonments amounts to ₹ 447.60 crore. Through a written submission, the Committee have been apprised that at present, 54 Cantonment boards are in deficit and require financial assistance to balance their budget. In this regard, the Committee recommend that if necessitated, Grant-in-Aid to the Cantonments be suitably augmented by the Ministry to ensure that civic facilities and welfare schemes/initiatives in the Cantonment areas are not affected due to lack of adequate budget.

Reply of the Government

The provision for BE 2022-23 was Rs. 201.58 crore under Capital outlay head on public works which includes Defence Accounts Department (Rs. 28.00 crore), Defence Estate Organisation (Rs. 173.03 crore) & Armed Forces tribunal (Rs. 0.50 crore). The RE in r/o DGDE (Rs. 173.03) was also kept at the level of BE 2022-23 and forwarded to Ministry of Finance for consideration. However, the actual expenditure under this Head up to 30.09.2022 was Rs. 8.97 crore only against the BE of Rs. 201.58 crore which includes the expenditure incurred by DGDE i.e. Rs. 0.36 crore. Accordingly, Ministry of Finance restricted the Funds to the tune of Rs. 75.00 crore under this head keeping in view of the pace of expenditure. And further funds to the tune of Rs. 48.50 crore was allocated to Defence Estate Organisation as per their pace of expenditure and absorption capacity.

2. Any additional funds under Grants-in-aid is provided by Ministry of Finance with the prior approval of Parliament. The committee may be assured that all efforts will be made to obtain additional funds projected by Defence Estate Organisation for "Grants-in-Aid" at Supplementary/RE stage under Revenue Section as any civic facilities and welfare schemes/initiatives in the Cantonment areas are not affected due to lack of adequate funds.

Amendment in Cantonment Act, 2006

Recommendation No. 26:

The Committee are aware that a new Cantonment Bill is awaiting to be introduced in the Parliament. During the Study Tours of the Committee, they were given to understand that this Bill would have several positive outcomes such as enhancing the revenue of the Cantonments, curtailing procedural bottlenecks in repairs of properties etc. During the course of examination of DFG 2023-24, the Committee were informed that from the Government's perspective, the amended Cantonment Act is still wanting in certain aspects. The view of the Government, as given to understand to the Committee, is that civilian areas shall not be under the administration of the military commander. Keeping in view interest of the residents in the Cantonment areas and need for greater democratization in the functioning of the Cantonment Boards in the country, the Committee recommend that urgent efforts be made by the Ministry to ensure that the new Act sees the light of the day at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

In order to bring uniformity in municipal laws governing civil areas of Cantonments and adjoining State Municipal areas, it has been decided 'in-principle' to excise civil areas of Cantonments and merge them with neighboring municipalities. Accordingly, broad modalities for proposed excision have been shared with concerned State Governments. One Cantonment namely, KhasYol has already been de-notified w.e.f 27.04.2023. The outcome of this exercise may have a bearing on the relevance of Cantonment Boards as prescribed under Cantonment Act, 2006 and would need to be suitably accounted for in the Cantonments Bill.

Merger of civilian areas in the Cantonments with adjoining municipalities

Recommendation No.27:

The Committee, with regard to the issue of merger of civilian areas in the Cantonments with adjoining municipalities, learn that excision of civilian areas and handing over to the State Government will take time because valuable land is involved. Further, consent from the State Government is also required in this regard. It has been reported that the panel appointed by Ministry of Defence (MoD) to examine the merger of civilian areas of Secunderabad Cantonment Board with the civil body has submitted its report to MoD. In this context, the Committee recommend that main findings and recommendations in the said report and the Ministry's plan to move ahead with the proposal be intimated to them at the stage of submitting Action Taken Replies. The details regarding proposals for merger of civil areas of Cantonments in other States with adjoining municipalities currently under active consideration in the Ministry may also be submitted to the Committee.

Reply of the Government

MoD has proposed broad modalities for excision of civil areas of Cantonments and their merger with adjoining Municipalities and shared these modalities with concerned State Governments on 23.05.2022 for their comments.

With regard to excision of Civil Area from the limits of KhasYol Cantonment in State of Himachal Pradesh, order for de-notification of KhasYol Cantonment has been issued on 27.04.2023.

Based on response received from State Governments, matter will be processed by MoD in consultation with the concerned State Government & Army.

Interests of the Civil Population in Cantonment Areas

Recommendation No. 28:

During deliberations on Demand for Grants 2023-24, the Committee raised the issue of grievances of the civil population in the Cantonment areas. One such issue was thoroughfare through some roads in the Cantonment areas. In this regard, the Defence Secretary apprised the Committee that permission for thoroughfare depends on the requirements of the Forces and security considerations. Further, a Joint Secretary level Committee has been visiting every Cantonment and the decision will be taken as per this committee's report. The Committee recommend that, as the unrestricted movement of civilians in the Cantonment areas is an issue that has been testing civil-military ties sine long, the work of the committee be expedited and a balanced decision on the issue is taken by the Ministry. It goes without saying here that interest of all the stakeholders be safeguarded while taking a final decision on the findings of the Joint Secretary Level Committee.

Reply of the Government

In order to resolve the issue of road closures, Ministry of Defence vide letter No 14(9)/2018-D(Q&C) dated 04.09.2018 had issued detailed procedure to be followed by Cantonment Boards for closure of roads in Cantonments and that no public road in the Cantonment shall be closed without following the laid down procedure, as per Section 258 of the Cantonments Act, 2006.

In this regard, a Committee chaired by JS (Lands & Works), MoD and consisting representatives of Army Headquarters & DGDE was constituted to look into individual cases of road closure after assessment of threat perception based on security considerations. In this regard, instructions have already been issued for opening of 12 roads in 07 Cantonments / Military Station besides proposing special measures to be taken in respect of 07 roads in 03 Cantonments based on the recommendation of the said Committee.

Building Bye-laws of Cantonments

Recommendation No. 29:

The Committee learn that The Energy Research Institute (TERI) has been engaged by the Ministry to conduct a study of six Cantonments and make recommendations on revision of Building Bye-Laws for Cantonments and to suggest a scheme for re-development of Cantonments. TERI has submitted its report and draft model building bye-laws based on the recommendations made by TERI is under consideration. The Committee would like to be apprised of the status of implementation of the report of TERI at the time of furnishing Action Taken Notes to the Committee. They also recommend that keeping in view the grievances of the people in the Cantonment areas, the notification regarding various components in revised building bye-laws may be done in small lots instead of consuming time for notifying the entire revised policy in one go”.

Reply of the Government

The Energy and Resources Institute “TERI”, an expert agency has been engaged for making recommendations on revision of building bye-laws. TERI has submitted its Report to the Ministry which is under consideration.

Resolution of legal cases pertaining to Defence Lands

Recommendation No.30:

The Committee, during discussion on the subject, desired information regarding pending court cases pertaining to Defence land. Till the date of finalization of this Report, the requisite information has not been received in the Secretariat. The Committee desire the requisite information now be furnished positively at the time of submitting Action Taken Replies. The Committee are aware of the recent digital strides in the arena of Lok Adalats. In this context, the Committee recommend that with a view to achieve faster resolution of disputes pertaining to

Defence land, the Ministry of Defence, wherever feasible, may also adopt such digital innovations.

Reply of the Government

Details of pending court cases regarding Disputes pertaining to Defence Land are as follows: -

Name of Directorate, DE	No. of pending court cases regarding disputes about the defence land			Total
	Dist./ Lower Court	High Court	Supreme Court	
1	2	3	4	5
Central Command	213	90	1	304
Eastern Command	62	33	1	96
Northern Command	38	19	0	57
Southern Command	346	390	27	763
South Western Command	21	32	1	54
Western Command	163	117	0	280
Total	843	681	30	1554

2. It is informed that the defence land disputes mainly pertain to land acquisition, title disputes, encroachments, unauthorized constructions on defence land, etc and therefore, from the very nature of the court cases, there is not much scope for out of court settlement through Lok Adalats. As regards, adoption of digital innovations in dealing with litigations regarding land disputes, it is stated that the Government of India has launched a Legal Information Management & Briefing System (LIMBS), which is a web based portal developed by Deptt. of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law & Justice for monitoring and handling of various court cases of Govt. Deptts. and Ministries. LIMBS has been developed in line with Digital India Mission and as a part of Government mandate to conduct cases in proactive, transparent and effective manner. Entry of details of the cases on the LIMBS portal is a continuous and dynamic process and for maintaining factual accuracy of the data from time to time. The court cases are being monitored at all levels of the Government through this tool and steps are taken for speedy disposal of the court cases and land disputes as also for compliance of court orders. The upto date information regarding the court cases which have been disposed of as well as current cases is entered/updated by the Defence Estates Offices and Cantt. Boards which are the field offices under the Defence Estates Organisation.

DEFENCE PUBLIC SECTOR UNDERTAKINGS (DPSUS)

Recommendation No.31:

Efficiency of the DPSUs

On examination of the order book position of nine DPSUs for the period 2022-23 to 2026-27, the Committee find that Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited (MIDHANI) has considerably low order book value when compared to the other old DPSUs. The Committee learn that MIDHANI is one of the manufacturers of special steels, Super alloys, and the only manufacturer of Titanium alloys in the country. Though MIDHANI is not a direct supplier to the Forces, the materials developed by MIDHANI are used in Space, Aerospace, Defence and Nuclear Sectors of the country. Therefore, the Committee recommend that vigorous steps in consultation with MIDHANI may be taken to ensure that efficiency and profitability of MIDHANI products does not lag behind compared to other DPSUs. In this regard, it goes without saying that the role of Department of Defence Production (DDP) is of paramount importance. The Committee would like to have a comprehensive submission from DDP to this end.

Reply of the Government

MIDHANI is currently having open orders of Rs. 1330 Cr. and further expected to book around Rs.500 Cr. before end of June-2023. Presently, the major orders are received from Defence sector. However, newly set up wide plate mill has successfully manufactured and supplied against trial orders of Special steel and Nickel Alloy wide plates. It is expected to improve sales from wide plate mill in commercial sector. Further, MIDHANI has supplied trial quantities of Super alloys, Special steel and Titanium alloys for qualification to global customers. Based on successful results, MIDHANI has started receiving bulk export orders. The order book position in coming years will improve from sectors other than Defence & Space sector.

For capacity utilization, Company has taken several in-house measures like process improvements, increasing machining facilities, revamping and retrofitting of age-old equipment and improvement in yield.

MIDHANI has also undertaken modernization, expansion and upgradation program to enhance the competitiveness of MIDHANI's products by replacing legacy technologies with newer, more innovative platforms for increased sales and product growth along with reduction in cost to become more competitive in market. The modernization programme has been undertaken in phased manner based on the current and future requirements of our existing customers as also to further diversify the product portfolio to cater to perceptive customers. In Phase-I of the expansion plan company has enhanced its melting capacity and phase-II plan of focused mainly on the conversion facilities for saleable products by procurement of facilities such as Ring Rolling Mill, 6000 t Forge Press and 20 t Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) etc.

These facilities will ensure self-reliance in production of extra wide plates of special steel and other strategic application including armour plates, manufacturing and supply of Helical

Compression Springs for Railway Wagons, Coaches, Locomotives and also help to meet the demands of energy, oil & gas sector, thus broadening the client base of MIDHANI.

Considering increasing global market demand for body armour, Vehicle armour, Bullet Proof Morcha, Bullt Resistant Jackets etc, and to cater the needs of domestic market an armour unit of MIDHANI is being set up at Rohtak, Haryana, supplying to various armed forces has already been started and the future of this project seems very promising.

Hence, in view of the several measures undertaken as explained in the above paras, towards modernization, up-gradation, augmentation and revamping and expanding business into new sectors will not only cut costs, improve efficiency, increase production capacity to sustain profitability but also put MIDHANI into global map as a state-of-the-art manufacturing company.

Indigenization efforts and self reliance in Defence sector

Recommendation No.32-33:

The Committee learn that value of total capital procurement in Defence sector through indigenous and foreign sources in 2021-22 stood at Rs 1,13,511.11 crore, which included procurement worth Rs 40,325.09 crore from foreign vendors. The Committee note that various steps are being taken for indigenization of Defence production by DPSUs. These inter alia include notification of Policy for indigenization of components and spares used in Defence Platforms, notification of Positive lists of indigenization of sub-systems, components etc., and launching of SRIJAN portal to give access to the Indian Manufacturing Industry of the items which have been imported in the past or are likely to be imported in the future by DPSUs and the Forces. Further, 18 Major platforms have been announced by the Ministry of Defence for industry led Design and Development under various routes.

Recommendation No.33:

The Committee note that as per the data of total capital procurement in Defence sector through indigenous and foreign sources in 2021-22 furnished by the Ministry, the percentage share of indigenous Defence sector amounts to approximately 65 percent. Further, the capital procurement from indigenous sources out of total procurement in 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 stood at approximately 60, 51, 58 and 64 percent, respectively. In this context, the Committee desire the details, alongwith reasons, of the imported critical components and systems in the major capital assets held by the Services which currently are not being developed or manufactured in the country. Further, to assess the growth of indigenization in Defence production by the DPSUs, the Committee recommend that a detailed note on the indigenous content vis-a-vis import content being used in manufacturing and production by the DPSUs may be furnished alongwith the efforts being made by the Ministry and the DPSUs for indigenous production of the same.

Keeping in view that the DPSUs are the mainstay of our defence production, the Committee categorically recommend the DPSUs to further develop their core competencies and enhance the import substitution efforts so that our country achieves complete self-reliance in defence

production at the earliest. Once self reliant these DPSUs would be in a position to export their products to friendly foreign countries also. Needless to say, the Ministry of Defence needs to provide adequate support in terms of timely placement of orders, financial support, aid in transfer of technology etc. to DPSUs for achieving this goal. In pursuance of accomplishing this end, the Committee also recommend wherever necessary the help of Indian Missions abroad should be taken. They are not oblivious of the fact that Military Attaches attached with our overseas mission can extend the desired help too. The Committee would also like to have a list of Military Attaches attached with our foreign nations and any numbers that want to be deployed in the Missions in the countries which are strategically important for us.

Reply of the Government

1. As the information regarding imported Critical items held by the services which are not being developed & manufactured is sensitive in nature, hence information cannot be divulged.

2. As a result of continuous efforts of Govt towards indigenisation of defence platform, the expenditure in defence procurement from domestic sources has increased from 54% of overall expenditure in 2018-19 to 67.41 % in 2022-23 which is Rs78891.47 Cr. The percentage of indigenous content in major platforms/ equipments/ weapons recently delivered by DPSU is furnished below:-

<u>Major Platform</u>	<u>% Indigenous</u>
Shipbuilding cases	> 70
Tank T-72	96%
Tank T-90	83%
Infantry combat vehicles (ICV) BMP-II	98%
Engine of Tank T-72	100%
Engine of Tank T-90	100%
Indigenous Rocket Launcher (IRL)	100%
Aircraft Weapon Loader (AWL)	100%
Combat Management System (CMS)	100%
Ship Data Network (SDN)	100%

3. **Indigenisation Efforts.** Since the launch of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, MoD have taken important initiatives in order to reduce quantum of import dependence and to foster self-reliance through indigenous development with participation from Indian Private Industries. Following are some specific initiatives in this regard:-

- Uploading of imported items to be indigenised in Srijan Defence Portal
- Identification of critical items for indigenization and inclusion in the Positive Indigenization Lists issued by MoD
- Concurrent indigenization during development of indigenous platforms
- Indigenization through 'Make-II' Procedure
- Giving access to Test Facilities available with Government agencies for utilization by Private Vendors
- iDEX Scheme

4. **Defence Attaches.** Role of Defence Attaches is important in harnessing opportunities and generating export leads from their countries of accreditation resulting in Defence Exports from India. Creation of new Def Wings in the different countries is reviewed regularly and Defence Attaches are accredited accordingly.

5. The information regarding current list of Military Attaches with foreign nations is sensitive in nature, hence information cannot be divulged.

Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)

Recommendation No 34:

The Committee learn that BDL has been working in collaboration with DRDO and foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) for manufacture and supply of various missiles and allied equipment to the Armed Forces. During oral evidence in connection with examination of DFG 2023-24, the Committee have been informed that BDL has started production of missiles with foreign collaboration. The Committee, in this regard, recommend that a detailed note be submitted to them stating the reason for selection of other companies for this collaboration instead of DRDO”.

Reply of the Government

1. Bharat Dynamics Limited was incorporated in 1970 as a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India to be the manufacturing base for guided missile systems and allied equipment for the Indian Armed Forces. The journey of self-reliance has begun in 1976 with the indigenisation of SS11B1, a first generation ATGM which was produced by BDL under collaboration with M/s Aerospatiale, France. This collaboration paved the way for the incorporation of the company and commence the production of 1st generation ATGM.

2. BDL entered into agreements under ToT project with foreign OEMs to produce certain categories of missiles under agreements that are entered into Govt to Govt licence agreements as there were no user accepted indigenous products available from DRDO with required specification.

3. Further, BDL has always strived to be the production partner for all missiles developed by DRDO for the Indian Armed forces. Only in areas where DRDO is not working and there is a need projected by the Armed Forces, BDL will venture to establish ToT with FOEMs for these niche technologies to meet the requirement of the Indian Armed Forces. This methodology will ensure faster development/production of niche technologies in the field of missiles and help in achieving overall goal of self-reliance & Atmanirbharta in Defence sector.

Recruitment of Non-official/independent Directors in the Boards of DPSUs

Recommendation No. 35:

The Committee are of considered view that Non-Official/Independent Directors contribute towards strengthening corporate governance in the companies by bringing an objective view and balancing the interests of the management and stakeholders. Therefore, the Committee recommend that the posts of Non-Official/ Independent Director, if vacant, in the Boards of DPSUs may be urgently filled.

Reply of the Government

With regard to filling vacant Non-Official/ Independent Director in DPSUs, it is stated that 29(twenty-nine) vacancies have been filled up in 9 DPSUs in 2021-22 and 03(Three) vacancies have been filled up in 2022-23. 7(Seven) new Defence companies have been incorporated and their business commenced w.e.f. 01.10.2021 and appointment of Non-official/Independent Directors for these 7 (Seven) new DPSUs has also been initiated.

WELFARE OF EX-SERVICEMEN:

Budget

Recommendation No.36:

The Committee learn that an amount of ₹ 33.80 crore and ₹ 5,431.56 crore has been allocated to Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR) and Ex- Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS), respectively, for Budget Estimates 2023-24. Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) Secretariat and Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW) have been allocated sum of ₹ 304.30 crore and ₹ 9 crore, respectively. The Committee note from the Ministry's submission that due to adequate budgetary grants in the previous financial year, the backlog of payments pertaining to KSB and ECHS has been cleared. The Committee, on scrutinising the data for budgetary allocation for Organisations/Divisions looking after welfare of Ex-Servicemen, find that the funds provided to DESW have remained static at ₹ 9 crore from 2021-22 to BE 2023-24. Taking into account rise in inflation, the Committee would like to be apprised of the reasons for no increase in the funds provided to DESW for the said period.

Reply of the Government

The funds provided to Department of Ex-servicemen welfare caters the Establishment (Salaries & Office Expenses etc.) related expenditure of the Department. Further, as regards the Budget provision from Financial Year 2021-22 to 2023-24 in respect of DESW, it is stated that funds during the said period have been provided keeping in view of the demand/projection made by DESW. As against the BE for the Financial year 2021-22 that was Rs. 6.86 crore, the funds to the tune of Rs.9.51 crore have been allotted in the BE 2023-24 which amounts to approximate 39% increase in BE 2023-24 over BE 2021-22.

Resettlement Opportunities

Recommendation No. 37:

The Committee learn that some of the new initiatives being undertaken for opening of new avenues for resettlement of Ex-Servicemen include *inter alia tie-ups* with corporates, Project PUNEH STHAPAN and DGR Security Agency Scheme. Considering the rapid strides in construction of road infrastructure in the country, the Committee recommend that feasibility of facilitation of opening/operationalisation of e-vehicle charging stations and eating joints by ESM or a group of ESM in a particular area alongside the highways may be explored by the Ministry of Defence. If necessary, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways may be approached for coordination for this proposal. The Committee also recommend that requisite funds for this novel scheme of resettlement of Ex-Servicemen may be allocated to DESW.

Reply of the Government

World class Highways are being developed as part of the Bharatmala Pariyojna, Golden Quadrilateral, North-South & East-West corridor and the associated internal corridors to improve road connectivity within our country joining important cities. With increase in vehicular traffic and travelers on these roads, there is need to provide quality services in the form of Fuel Stations, Rest Rooms, Motels, Eateries, e-vehicle charging facilities etc alongside the Highways for rest and recuperation for travelers. Various outlets of this nature are coming up alongside these highways. For all the new expressways, Ex-servicemen (ESM) may be allocated areas at lease/rent to run as part of an Ex-servicemen Welfare Scheme through Directorate General of Resettlement. It is considered that one or two such projects may be undertaken after consultation with stakeholders and depending upon their success, further action may be taken.

Reservation benefits for Ex-Servicemen

Recommendation No. 38-39:

The Committee learn that following reservation benefits exists for Ex-Servicemen in various establishments:

- i. Reservation in Central Government (10% in Group 'C' posts);
- ii. Reservation in PSUs/Banks (14.5% in Group 'C' & 24.5% in Group 'D' including 4.5% for disabled ESM/dependents of servicemen killed in action);

- iii. Central Police Organizations/Para Military Forces - 10% upto the rank of Assistant Commandant; and
- iv. Defence Security Corps (DSC) - 100%.

The Committee note from the candid submission of the Ministry in this regard that the percentage of availing of above mentioned reservation benefits by ESM is not satisfactory. One of the reasons adduced by the Ministry in this regard is non-completion of the roster of ESM. In this context, the Committee recommend that the draft roster for ESM may be finalized in mission mode and the Central/State Governments may be vigorously pursued by the Ministry of Defence for filling the vacancies in posts reserved for ESM. Here the Central Government implies the Department of Personnel and Training.

Reply of the Government

Draft guidelines on reservation for Ex-servicemen (ESM) have been compiled by DOP&T which include the model roster of ESM also, and necessary comments of this Department have been communicated to DOP&T. DOP&T is actively working in the matter.

As regards filling up of vacancies reserved for ESM, it is submitted that the reservation policy for ESM is implemented by the concerned Government Departments. DGR has been designated as the nodal agency to monitor the reservation policy for ESM. The Govt issues advisories from time to time, to concerned Departments/CPSUs/Banks/State Governments to conduct special drive to fill up the backlog vacancies reserved for ESM by adopting relaxed standards of qualifications. Liaison Officers have also been appointed in various Departments/PSUs/Banks etc. to ensure implementation of reservation policy for ESM in letter and spirit.

Recommendation No. 39:

The Committee opine that one of the reasons for non-fulfilment of reservation quota for ESM in various posts may be financial security offered by implementation of One Rank One Pension scheme. Further, inspite of reservation and relaxation of age in the posts, eligibility criteria may not be fulfilled by certain ESM. Therefore, the Committee recommend that a study taking into account above considerations may be conducted by the Ministry, in consultation with the stakeholders, regarding availing of reservation benefits by ESM.

Reply of the Government

Adequate number of ESM are not qualifying for posts reserved for them for want of requisite educational qualification. The Government endeavors to explore every possible avenue for increasing employment opportunities for the Ex-servicemen through various initiatives including pre and post-retirement trainings and awareness programmes. Suitable training is also imparted to the willing ESM to prepare them for self-employment ventures.

Zila Sainik Board

Recommendation No. 40:

The Committee learn that KSB Secretariat is responsible for welfare of Ex-Servicemen and their dependents and administration of welfare funds. It is assisted in its task by 34 Rajya Sainik Boards (RSBs) and 403 Zila Sainik Boards (ZSBs), which are under the administrative control of respective State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Government of India shares 75% of the expenditure incurred on the maintenance of RSBs/ZSBs in respect of the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and Himachal Pradesh and 60% for other States/UTs while the remaining expenditure is borne by respective State Governments.

Reply of the Government

It is submitted that there are 34 Rajya Sainik Boards and 409 Zila Sainik boards (ZSBs) in the country.

Recommendation No. 41:

The Committee further learn that the composition of Zila Sainik Board is as follows:

President	: District Collector
Vice President	: Senior Ex-service Officer
Ex-officious Members	: Heads of State Government Departments/Recruiting Officer
Non official Members	: Two Ex-Servicemen
Secretary	: Four Prominent Citizens
	: Zila Sainik Welfare Officer

The Ministry, during discussion on the subject, submitted that there is variation in composition of the Zila Sainik Board in various States depending on the extant rules and availability of suitable candidates. The Committee are of the considered view that Zila Sainik Boards play significant role in resolution of grievances of ESM and their families/ dependents. In this regard, the Committee recommend that for ensuring proper functioning of all Zila Sainik Boards in the country, a uniform policy aiming at coordination with all States may be formulated by the Ministry of Defence. Needless to say, the policy should incorporate views of all stakeholders viz the State Governments, District Administration and Ex-Servicemen.

Reply of the Government

The policy on composition of Zila Sainik Board is uniform across the country. The District Collector/Magistrate leads the administration and the Law and Order Organisation in a district. Thus the decisions taken by ZSB would be more implementable if the current ZSB set up is retained. The composition of ZSB is promulgated by each state/ district from time to time which is in general conformity to the laid down policy. The District Collector is the Chairperson of the ZSB and the Secy, ZSB is invariably an Ex-service Officer. The ZSB being a mixed composition of Civil Administration Officials and Ex-servicemen (ESM) enables resolution of welfare issues of

ESM in a better way especially related to Revenue/Home Deptt issues. The issue was also emphasized during the KSB meeting held on 11 April 2023. The example of Sainik Bandhu meeting model of Uttar Pradesh was also shared with all the States.

Recommendation No. 42:

During the discussion on DFG 2023-24, in order to increase representation of elected representatives, the issue of feasibility of inclusion of local MPs in Zila Sainik Boards (ZSBs) was also discussed. Considering that the Chairperson of District Development Coordination and Monitoring committee (DISHA) in a district is the senior most Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) elected from the district and nominated by the Ministry of Rural Development and the District Collector is the Member Secretary, the Committee recommend that more appropriate and pragmatic solution in this regard is to call the Zila Sainik Board Secretaries to DISHA meetings for meaningful discussion of issues related to ESM. Since the Committee have selected 'A review of functioning of Zila Sainik Boards in the country' as a separate subject, examination of which is undergoing, they would like to examine this issue in detail during preparation of the Report under reference. Nevertheless, in the first instance, they would like the MoD to give their justified opinion with regard to the Committee's recommendation.

Reply of the Government

In order to enable participation of elected representatives in the issues pertaining to Ex-Servicemen (ESM) welfare at district level, the Standing Committee on Defence has recommended that the Chairperson of District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) who is the senior most Member of Parliament (MP) in the district should call the Secretary, ZSB for the DISHA Meetings. It is opined that this could enable active involvement of elected representatives in the ESM community welfare issues.

Agnipath scheme

Recommendation No. 43:

The Committee note that Agnipath scheme has been introduced in 2022 as recruitment scheme for youth to serve in the Armed Forces. The Committee are aware that various incentives including age relaxation and reservation in vacancies have been announced for Agniveers, who will not be inducted as regular cadre in the Armed Forces, by the Government, several State Governments and some industrial and financial institutions. The Committee desire that details of such incentives, benefits and opportunities may be intimated to the Committee at the stage of furnishing Action Taken Replies. They also recommend that to maintain attraction of the Armed Forces as a career option amongst the youth of 106 the country, such benefits available to them under Agnipath scheme should be given wide coverage through all forms of media.

Reply of the Government

‘Classified’

Agnipath Scheme

Recommendation No. 44:

The Committee note that Agniveers who will not be absorbed in the Forces will have much younger profile compared to that of Ex-Servicemen whom DGR is presently looking after. Therefore, the Committee recommend that a focused and specialized approach for re-settlement of such Agniveers needs to be devised by Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR). Keeping in view that the training of the first batch of Agniveers has started in 2023 and their consequent selection will be completed in 2026-2027, the Committee recommend that in order to provide right guidance to the Agniveers, who would not be inducted in the Forces i.e. after the selection of 25 percent of them into the Forces, plethora of educational and resettlement opportunities should be available to them. In this regard, they recommend that a separate nodal agency/division may be established in the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.

Reply of the Government

Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR) presently caters only for Resettlement, Training & Employment opportunities for Ex-Servicemen (ESM) only. Agniveers will belong to a different category and are not given the status of ESM. Therefore, no comments are offered at this stage as each Service Headquarter is working individually for their Agniveers.

Non-Uniformity in Ex-Gratia Monetary Benefits/Compensation provided to the Martyrs

Recommendation No. 45:

The Committee note that there is lack of uniformity in ex-gratia monetary benefits/compensation provided to the martyrs amongst various States in the country. The Committee have raised this issue in their earlier Reports too. During examination of Demands for Grants 2023-24, the Committee were informed that this matter would be included as an agenda for discussion during the forthcoming meeting of Kendriya Sainik Board scheduled in April, 2023. The Committee desire that outcome/result of the meeting of KSB on the said issue may be intimated to them at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

The issue regarding non-uniformity in Ex-Gratia monetary benefits being provided to Next-of-Kin/ family members by respective States/UTs was discussed in the agenda of the 31st Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) Meeting held on 11 Apr 2023. While there was agreement on the wide variation in the amount of Ex-Gratia given by different States/UTs, it also emerged that the States provide ex-gratia grants based on respective financial capacity. However, the states were requested to enhance the Ex-Gratia benefits.

Vacancies in the Armed Forces reserved for the widows of Defence personnel

Recommendation No.46:

The Committee learn that 5% reservation has been provided to widows of Defence personnel for Short Service Commission Women (Technical and Non technical). In this context, the Committee, during examination of DFG 2023-24, had brought a case of a War Widow to the notice of the Ministry wherein the War Widow had cleared Services Selection Board (SSB) assessment, however, the vacancy had not been notified till then. The Committee, in their 31st Report (17th Lok Sabha) on 'Assessment of Welfare Measures Available to War Widows/Families in Armed Forces', had also examined this issue. In this regard, the Committee recommend that appropriate mechanism should be formulated on urgent basis for timely release and notification of vacancies in the Armed Forces reserved for the widows of Defence personnel.

Reply of the Government

'Classified'

Appointment/promoting the Olympic medal winners of the country to the officer cadre in the Armed Forces.

Recommendation No.47:

The Committee, during oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Defence during examination of DFG 2023-24, raised the issue of exploring the possibility of appointing/promoting the Olympic medal winners of the country to the Officer cadre in the Armed Forces. The Ministry has assured that the matter would be processed in the Services for necessary examination. The Committee would like that the result of the Ministry's examination of the matter be furnished at the time of submitting Action Taken Replies.

Reply of the Government

'Classified'

Budgetary Provisions

Recommendation No.48:

The Committee observe that Defence Pensions, under the Ministry of Defence provides for Pensionary charges in respect of retired Defence personnel (including Defence civilian employees) of the three Services viz. Army, Navy and Air Force and employees of erstwhile Indian Ordnance Factories etc. It covers payment of Service pension, gratuity, family pension, disability pension, commuted value of pension, leave encashment amongst others. The Committee are informed that as on 1.4.2022, the total number of Defence pensioners in the country is 32,94,181 including 6,14,536 Defence Civilian Pensioners and 26,79,645 Armed Forces Pensioners. The Committee find that out of the total budget of ₹5,93,537.64 crore allocated to the Ministry of Defence in Budget Estimates (BE)2023-24, an amount of ₹ 1,38,205

crore i.e. 23.28 percent of the entire Defence Budget has been earmarked for Defence Pensions. The Committee have been given to understand that the additional requirement of ₹ 18,509.00 crore for BE 2023-24 (₹ 1,38,205.00crore) over BE 2022-23 (₹ 1,19,696.00 crore) is due to normal growth in pension, dearness relief and enhanced One Rank One Pension (OROP) rates. The Committee understand that the budget for Defence pension provides financial assistance and security to those who have served the nation and in order to maintain a youthful and agile profile of the Forces, a large percentage of Defence personnel are retired at a much younger age compared to their civilian counterpart and hence, the former have to fulfill substantial liabilities even after they are retired. Therefore, the Committee recommend that, after evaluation of escalation in pension amount on account of increase in number of pensioners, enhanced Dearness Relief and implementation of OROP, additional funds, if sought at the Revised Estimates stage, should be allocated under this head.

Reply of the Government

The Budget Estimates for the Financial year 2023-24 has been approved for ₹1,38,205.00crore. There is an increase of Rs. 18509.00 crore in the BE 2023-24 as against the BE 2022-23. The increase is due to the normal growth in pension, dearness relief and enhancement of the pension rate due to implementation of the OROP wef July 2019.

Defence Pensions being an obligatory expenditure, additional requirement of funds for the Financial Year 2023-24 under Defence Pensions Grant, if needed, will be projected/ sought at the Supplementary Stages of 2023-24 and also at the Revised Estimates stage of 2023-24 to Ministry of Finance for consideration.

SPARSH-SYSTEM FOR PENSION ADMINISTRATION (RAKSHA)

Recommendation No.49:

The Committee learn that System for Pension Administration (Raksha) (SPARSH), announced in the Budget Speech of 2017-18, is an initiative of the Ministry of Defence which aims at providing comprehensive solution to the administration of pension to the Defence Pensioners. 19,33,233 legacy pensioners (both pre and post 7th CPC Pensioners) have been migrated to SPARSH from various Pension Disbursing Agencies (PDAs) as on 15.1.2023. Further, migration of remaining pensioners from existing banks is also in process. The Committee note that migration of approximately 13 lakh pensioners to SPARSH is pending and therefore, recommend that a target date may be fixed for completion of migration process of the remaining eligible pensioners so that the benefit of digital empowerment through SPARSH reaches every Defence pensioner. They also recommend that details regarding outreach programmes conducted by the Ministry of Defence for the Pensioners and their dependents who lack technological awareness and ready access to digital facilities may be intimated to the Committee at the time of furnishing Action Taken Replies on this Report.

Reply of the Government

Defence Accounts Department signed a MoU with CSC e-Governance Services India Limited, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) under MeitY to onboard pension services under the digital platform “System for Pension Administration – Raksha (SPARSH)” initiative with more than four lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs) all over the country. The MoU was signed by Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (PCDA) Pension and CEO of CSC e-Governance Services India Limited in February 2023 to further promote ease of living and resolve pension – related issues in a time – bound manner. As of now, MoU has been signed with eleven (11) Banks who are onboard as Service Centres under SPARSH across more than 14,000 branches throughout India. The web-based digital system for pension disbursement to defence pensioners has grown exponentially with more than Rs. 76495.89 Crore disbursed up to 25th April 2023. The total number of beneficiaries onboard SPARSH has reached over 21.71 lakh covering 66% of the total defence pensioners with SPARSH. The average time in settlement of pension claims has come down significantly to about 16 days.

In the year 2022, it was decided by the Ministry of Defence to organise the outreach programme at different stations of country to spread out the knowledge about the SPARSH amongst the defence pensioners and their dependents, who lack technological awareness and ready access to digital facilities. As per the direction given by the MoD as well as HQ office outreach programme was started from June, 2022. Thereafter, regular outreach programme is being organised to aware the pensioner and their dependents about SPARSH.

When department came to know about the problems faced by the pensioners/family pensioners for identification after extending the time limit, it was decided that during outreach programme from March, 2023 identification through DLC/MLC may also be carried out on the spot in respect of those pensioners whose identifications are pending. Outreach was started in June, 2022 and till April, 2023, total 69 outreach programme were conducted in which 33140 pensioners were approached and they were aware about the facilities available on SPARSH. Further, in outreach conducted in which 33140 pensioners were approached and they were aware about the facilities on SPARSH. Further, in outreach conducted during March, 2023 and April, 2023 identification in respect of total 3740 pensioners was also done.

One Rank One Pension (OROP)

Recommendation No.50:

OROP was implemented w.e.f. 01.07.2014 vide MoD order dated 07.11.2015. OROP implies that uniform pension be paid to the Armed Forces Personnel retiring in the same rank with the same length of service regardless of their date of retirement. The Committee are given to understand that OROP implies bridging the gap between the rate of pension of the current pensioners and the past pensioners at periodic intervals. The Committee note that the estimated annual financial implication of implementation of OROP is ₹ 8,450.04 Crore @ 31% Dearness Relief. Arrears w.e.f. 01.07.2019 to 30.06.2022 have been estimated as ₹ 23,638.07 crore as per the applicable dearness relief. This expenditure is over and above the ongoing expenditure on account of OROP. It has been reported that a circular has been issued recently by the Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (Pensions) on asking banks, accounting offices, pension disbursing authorities and other agencies concerned to ensure timely payment of arrears of

OROP to all eligible pensioners before March 2023 in one go in accordance with the Supreme Court's orders. The Committee desire factual details in this regard may be furnished to them within one month of the presentation of this Report. As the issue of OROP and its implementational aspects have been sub-judice in the past for various reasons, the Committee recommend that regular interactional meetings, either physical or in virtual mode, with the veterans may be conducted by the Ministry for maintaining transparency and lucidity on the matter.

Reply of the Government

Office of the Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (Pensions), Allahabad/O/o CGDA has intimated the status of payment of arrears on account of OROP by the various PDAs as under:

Sl. No.	Pension Disbursing Agencies	Amount in Rs.
1.	SPARSH upto 15.05.2023	41,51,73,65,222.00
2.	Public Sector/private banks upto 16.05.2023	21,49,91,46,548.00
3.	I.E. Kathmandu Nepal upto 18.05.2023	2,19,51,20,597.00
4.	Team Aashraya upto 31.03.2023	70,17,41,22,351.00

Further, regarding the Committee's recommendation on regular interactional meetings with the pensioners, it is submitted that in the year 2022, it was decided to organize the Outreach program at different stations of country to spread out the knowledge about the SPARSH amongst the defence Pensioners and their Dependents who lack technological awareness and ready access to digital facilities. As per the direction of this Ministry, outreach program was started from June, 2022. Thereafter, regular outreach program is being organized to aware the pensioner and their dependents about SPARSH.

CHAPTER – III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES RECEIVED FROM THE GOVERNMENT

-Nil-

CHAPTER – IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Growth of Defence Budget

Recommendation No. 4:

The Committee learn that the total Defence Budget (including MoD (Civil) and Defence Pensions) is ₹ 5,93,537.64 Crore for FY 2023-24, which is 13.18% of total Central Government Expenditure and 1.97% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the year 2023-24. Also, Capital Budget of Ministry of Defence for 2023-24 is approximately 17.12% of the total capital expenditure of the Central Government Expenditure. A close examination of the data furnished by the Ministry reveals that from the year 2020-21 onwards, Defence Expenditure as percentage of Central Government Expenditure has hovered around 13-14 percent (approximately). Defence Expenditure, as a percentage of GDP, which has been in the range of 2-3 percent 2018-19 onwards, stands at 1.97 percent for 2023-24 (BE). The Committee note the Ministry's submission in this context that the global ideal estimated for Defence Expenditure as a percentage of GDP is 3 percent. This is done on the assumption that Tax to GDP ratio is in the range of 10 to 13 percent. Further, it was stated by the Defence Secretary that taking into account the increase in the country's GDP, the Ministry may not be able to absorb 3 percent of the GDP. The Committee understand that there are some constraints in having a benchmark percentage of GDP earmarked for deciding on the allocation to the Defence Sector. However, they are of the considered view that requirements of capital acquisition and modernization, ascending salary and pension bills, position of Rupee vis a vis dollar and Defence expenditure by the neighbouring countries warrant introspection for arriving at a definite benchmark percentage of Defence expenditure as the country's GDP. Therefore, the Committee recommend in unequivocal terms that if not the global parameter of 3 percent, feasibility may be explored to fix parameter for Defence expenditure as the country's GDP which will help in forming a right trajectory for the Defence Expenditure for our country.

Reply of the Government

It may not be appropriate to think about defence spending in terms of national economic output as countries vary in terms of economic size, tax to GDP ratio, defence needs etc. As far as India is concerned, the expenditure on Defence is the largest amongst the Central Ministries and it has been growing consistently since 2014-15 onwards. Defence preparedness is a result of the capabilities acquired over the years and not merely on budget allocation of a particular year. Allocation for defence is adequate to sustain the desired level of defence preparedness. Further based on expenditure during the year, pending committed liabilities, critical/operational requirements, threat perception etc., additional funds, if required, are sought at Supplementary/RE stage. The progress of expenditure is reviewed from time to time to ensure that the allocated funds are optimally utilized towards operational activities so that urgent and critical capabilities are acquired without any compromise to operational preparedness of the Defence Services.

CHAPTER – V

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH GOVERNMENT HAVE
FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES/REPLIES AWAITED**

-Nil-

**New Delhi;
18 December, 2023
27 Agrahayana, 1945 (Saka)**

**JUAL ORAM
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Defence**

DETAILS OF LAST TWO YEAR MEETINGS

Agency	State level Meetings	Year 2022-23				Year 2023-24			
		Case Projected	No. of Meetings	Case Approved	Percentage cases resolved	Case Projected	No. of Meetings	Case Approved	Percentage cases resolved
BRO	FRCM (Fortnightly Regional Co-Ordination Meeting)	34	41	13	38%	37	91	14	38%
	SBWL (State Board Wild Life)	10	15	7	70%	14	15	7	50%

FOREST CLEARANCE CASES : BRO

S/No.	State	Project	Name of Road	Proposed Specification	State /ID NO. S.NO. on PARIVESH	Present Status
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	Brahmank	Migging- Tutting (Km 15 to Km 35)	NHDL	FP/AR/ROAD/157299/2022	(a) Stage I clearance is under progress. (b) Case pending with IRO. Post reply to observation on 7 April, 2023.
2.		Vartak	Nelya- Hotonga	NHSL	FP/AR/ROAD/142357/2021	Clarifications sought by IRO, Guwahati has been forwarded on 15 Mar 2023.
3.		Vartak	Nelya- Dhaula	NHSL	FP/AR/ROAD/116857/2020	(a) All relevant details have been submitted through DFO to CCF Banderdewa on 29 Nov 2022. (b) The case is being migrated to PARIVESH 2.0 for further processing.
4.		Vartak	Mago- Tsela	0.000	FP/AR/ROAD/43026/2019(ol d Proposal) New Proposal: FP/AR/ROAD/413454/2023	(a) Initially FC proposal was uploaded by CPWD i.e., FP/AR/Road/43026/2019. (b) Fresh proposal No. FP/AR/Road/413454/2023 has been uploaded on PARIVESH on 09 Jan 2023. (c) Observation raised on 30 March 2023 in FRCM meeting and reply to the same submitted on 03 Apr 2023. (d) Case is presently pending with PCCF, Itanagar.
5.		Udayak	Mipi- Andratha ng	CI-9 to NHDL	FP/AR/ROAD/148555/2021	(a) Proposal uploaded in PARIVESH in Jan 2021. (b) Case approved by SBWL on 14 Sep 2022. (c) Clearance awaited from PCCF, FC to be awarded post sanction of WLC. (d) WLC Update. (i) Biodiversity impact report prepared by ZSI (Govt. Accredited firm) and same uploaded on PARIVESH on 25 Mar 2023. (ii) The reply has been received by MoEF&CC and will be taken up in next NBWL meeting scheduled on 25 Apr 2023.
6.		Udayak	Hunli- Metenglia ng- Hayuliang (Km 165 to km 158)	NHDL	FP/AR/ROAD/114789/2020	(a) Joint survey carried out from 11 Nov 2021. List of enumeration of trees and species prepared. (b) Reply of observations submitted to CCF and then to PCCF on 21 Apr 2022. (c) There is a case of violation on this road by State Govt as they constructed PMGSY road before BRO took over this road for upgradation from State Govt. (d) FC to be awarded post settlement of violation case by State Govt. (e) Case is pending with PCCF Itanagar due to decision on violation due to PMGSY road.

S/No.	State	Project	Name of Road	Proposed Specification	State /ID NO. S.NO. on PARIVESH	Present Status
7.	Arunachal Pradesh	Udayak	Diversion proposal for widening/ improvement of existing road to NHDL specificati on of road Hayuliang Changwin ti (KM 45.05 to KM 50.82) Changwin ti- Walong- Namti (KM 0.00 to 54.45)		FP/AR/DEF/59926 /2020 FP/AR/ROAD/145483/2021	(a) Proposal forwarded to IRO Guwahati by PCCF on 30 Sep 2022. (b) Further submitted the details to CCF on 07 Mar 2023. (c) During meeting with PCCF, Itanagar on 20 March 2023 he informed that details have been submitted to him on 17 Mar 2023.
8.		Udayak	Diversion proposal for forest land for constr of Changlo- Hagam- Rocham road from Km 0.00 to 6.50	NHSL	FP/AR/DEF/45059 /2020	(a) Stage -I under progress. (b) Proposal agreed in FRCM meeting on 16 Dec 22. (c) Proposal fwd to IRO Guwahati on 23 March 2023 for approval.
9.		Udayak	Diversion proposal of forest land for constructi on of Changlo agam- Kapaup Road from km 0.00 to 6.50	NHSL	FP/AR/DEF/49557 /2020	AIP (Stage-I) accorded by IRO Guwahati on 07 Mar 2023.
10.		Udayak	Diversion proposal for forest land for constr of Dong- Jachep Road from KM 0.00 to 78.00	NHSL	FP/AR/DEF/12183 8/2021	(a) Stage-I accorded on 14 Oct 2022. (b) Amount of Rs. 34.20 Crs deposited on 21 Nov 2022 and necessary certificate furnished to PCCF office on 29 Nov 2022 and compliance of Stage-I forwarded. (c) Payment confirmation is pending with CAMPA account. (e) Resolution of fund deposition under progress.
11.		Udayak	Diversion proposal for forest land for constr/im pvt of road Namti- Kibithu road km 0.00-20.31 and Kibithu- Thouchu- Wacha km 0.00 to 9.75	NHDL	FP/AR/ROAD/142632/2021	(a) Details of alternate CA area has been asked by PCCF from CCF Tezu 05 Jan 2023. (b) Proposal submitted to IRO, Guwahati by Addl PCCF on 07 Feb 2023 and returned to PCCF with observations regarding KML files and CA area on 20 Feb 2023.
12.		Arunank	Huri-Tapa (Foot track, patrol routes & FSB for ITBP)	Foot Track	FP/AR/ROAD/142363/2021	Replies to Queries of IRO submitted and proposals are pending at IRO, Guwahati on PARIVESH since 03 March 2023.
13.		Arunank	Tapa- Goying (Foot track, patrol routes & FSB for ITBP)	Foot Track	FP/AR/ROAD/142362/2021	
14.		Arunank	Tapa-Karu (Foot track, patrol routes & FSB for ITBP)	Foot Track	FP/AR/ROAD/142365/2021	
15.		Arunank	Sarli- Semai (Foot track patrol routes & FSB for ITBP)	Foot Track	FP/AR/ROAD/142263/2021	

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S/No.	State	Project	Name of Road	Proposed Specification	State S.NO. /ID NO. on PARIVESH	Present Status
16.	Arunachal Pradesh	Arunank	Sarli- Phulle (Foot track, patrol routes & FSB for ITBP)	Foot Track	FP/AR/ROAD/142359/2021	Replies to Queries of IRO submitted and proposals are pending at IRO, Guwahati on PARIVESH since 03 March 2023.
17.	Manipur	Sewak	Senapati- Phaibung (P1-A)	CI-9	FP/MN/ROAD/842/2010	(a) Stage I clearance taken from State Govt on 27 Oct 2020. (b) Compliance report for Stage-II clearance submitted on 14 Jul 2022 to Nodal Office, PCCF Manipur.
18.		Sewak	Chakpikro ng-Sajik- Aigong-Khongatal	NHSL	FP/MN/ROAD/156171/2022	(a) In-Principle/Stage-I approval granted on 18 Jan 2023 (b) Payment of cost CA under process by User Agency.
19.	Sikkim	Swastik	Toong- Partem-Pt- 4685 Tamze	NHSL	FP/SK/ROAD/36928/2018	(a) Stage I clearance taken from State Govt in Aug 2022. (b) Payment processed on 02 Jan 2023. (c) Process of Stage II clearance is under progress.
20.		Swastik	Rishi- Rongli- Kupup (Km 38 to km 55)	NHDL	FP/SK/DEF/149361/2021	(a) Part V completed and forwarded to IRO, Kolkata on 03 Dec 2022. (b) Reply to clarifications forwarded by APCCF, Sikkim to IRO Kolkata on 13 Mar 2023.
21.		Swastik	Dokala- Gyemoch en-t 3777-BP 10	NHSL	FP/SK/DEF/6094/2021(Old proposal) New proposal: FP/SK/DEF/153317/2022	(a) Complete case was forwarded to IRO, Kolkata on Dec 2022. (b) Reply to observations was forwarded to IRO Kolkata on 13 Mar 2023. (c) Case is under scrutiny with IRO, Kolkata.
22.		Swastik	Kumani to Gairibass	NHDL	FP/WB/DEF/149451/2021	(a) Stage-I accorded by State Govt 25 Nov 2022. (b) Payment of Rs 12.94 Cr carried out. (c) Permission for commencement of work granted wef 15 Feb 2023. (e) Case is pending with DFO, Jalpaiguri for Stage-II clearance.
23.		Swastik	Singham-Dikchu	NHDL	FP/SK/DEF/151265/2022	(a) Stage-I clearance granted. (b) Payment of ₹ 47.05 lakh made on 04 Mar 2023. (c) Case is pending with CF(T),DeoraliGangtok for Stage-II clearance.
24.	UT of J&K	Sampark	Akhnoor- Poonch (Km 162.905 to Km 184.408)	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/146295/2022	Stage-I clearance is pending with Forest Authorities of State Govt since 18 Mar 2023.
25.		Sampark	Budhal- Mohr-Gul (Km 0.00 to Km 20.00)	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/156814/2022	Stage-I clearance is pending with DFO since 29 Nov 2022.
26.		Sampark	Budhal- Mohr- Gul(Km 22.70 to Km 50.10)	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/151188/2022	(a) Stage-I FC is pending. (b) Joint site inspection and to do enumeration of trees on 04 Apr 2023 is under preparation with DFO. (c) Reply to observations is being prepared with DFO.
27.		Sampark	Budhal- Mohr-Gul (Km 53.25 to Km 88.10)	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/151266/2022	(a) Stage-I FC is delayed due to land dispute between Forest and Revenue Departments of State Govt. (b) Dispute resolution is under process by State Govt.
28.		Sampark	Budhal- Mohr-Gul (Km 88.10 Km 114.00)	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/151273/2022	(a) Stage-I clearance under progress. (b) Case returned to User Agency due to non-receipt of Adm Approval

S/No.	State	Project	Name of Road	Proposed Specification	State /ID NO. PARIVESH	S.NO. on	Present Status
29.	UT of J&K	Sampark	Reasi- Arnas-Mohr	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/43956/2020		(a) Stage-I FC taken from State Govt. (b) Payment of Rs 61.34 lakhs carried out on 03 Mar 2022. (c) Compliance report awaited from State Govt.
30.		Beacon	Srinagar- Baramulla -Uri	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/15061/2021		(a) Stage-I under progress. (b) EDS issued by IRO, Jammu on 27 Feb 2023. (c) Reply is awaited from State Govt.
31.		Beacon	Rafiabad- Kupwara- Chowkibal -Tangdhar	NHDL	FP/JK/DEF/151350/2022		(a) Proposal not yet finalised due to objection raised by DFO in the approved alignment of the road. (b) As per PARIVESH, the proposal is in draft stage.
32.	Himachal Pradesh	Deepak	Manali- Sarchu (Km 7 to Km 13)	NHDL	SW/84594/2022		(a) Online new proposal with No. SW/284594/2022 uploaded for Stage-I clearance on 28 Sep 2022 on PARIVESH. (b) case is under scrutiny with Nodal Officer, Shimla.
33.		Deepak	Manali- Sarchu (Km 13 to Km 31)	NHDL	FP/HP/DEF/153756/2022		(a) Proposal uploaded on PARIVESH dt 31 Mar 2022 for Stage I clearance. (b) case is under scrutiny with Forest Department since 14 Mar 2023.
34.		Deepak	Manali- Sarchu (Km 185 to Km 195)	NHDL	FP/HP/DEF/41573/2019		(a) Stage I approval is under progress. (b) Wildlife Management Plan and resolution of observations by forest Department is under progress by User Agency.
35.		Deepak	Sansari- Killar- Thiro- Tandi	NHDL	FP/HP/DEF/34605/2018		(a) Proposal submitted online on 20 Jul 2018 for Stage I Clearance. (b) Status of existence of road prior to 1980 provided to DFO Keylong on 20 Mar 23. Inspection of Conservator Forest is pending.
36.		Deepak	Sumdo- Kaza- Grampoo (Km 157.85 to Km 166.00)	NHIW	FP/HP/DEF/117865/2020		(a) Stage I approval under progress. (b) Case forwarded to IRO, Shimla on 24 Mar 2023 after notifying observation raised in 10th REC meeting on 12 Aug 2022
37.		Deepak	Manali- Sarchu (Avalance Protection)	NHDL	FP/HP/DEF/155146/2022		(a) Case uploaded on PARIVESH on 14 Nov 2022 for Stage I clearance. (b) DFO Keylong submitted the proposal to CCF, Kullu on 27 Feb 2023 and is under scrutiny at Forest Department.
38.		Deepak	Manali- Sarchu (Avalance Protection)	NHDL	FP/HP/DEF/154599/2022		(a) Case uploaded on PARIVESH on 14 Nov 2022 for Stage I clearance. (b) DFO Keylong submitted the proposal to CCF, Kullu on 27 Feb 23 and is under scrutiny at Forest Department.
39.	Deepak	Sansari- Killar- Thiro- Tandi	NHDL	FP/HP/Road/34606/2018		(a) The proposal uploaded on PARIVESH on 20 Jul 2018 for Stage I clearance. (b) Conservator of Forest (CF's) Joint inspection awaited.	
40.	UT of Ladakh/ Himachal	Yojak	Palchan bypass	NHDL	FP/HP/DEF/157139/2022		(a) Stage I under progress. (b) Joint

S/No.	State	Project	Name of Road	Proposed Specification	State /ID NO. S.NO. on PARIVESH	Present Status
41.	UT of Ladakh/Himachal Pradesh	Yojak	Internal roads at site of Seri Nallah	CL-9	FP/HP/DEF/152924/2022 Revised No. FP/HP/DEF/400307/2022	(a) Stage I is under progress. (b) File duly completed by DFO Kullu received on 15 March 2023. (c) The case is reuploaded on PARIVESH and case file submitted to DFO Kullu for processing. (d) Joint survey by CCF is awaited and will be arranged at the earliest.
42.		Yojak	Shinkunla Tunnel	NHDL	FP/HP/DEF/153298/2022	(a) Stage-I under progress. (b) Proposal folder duly recommended by CCF Kullu has been submitted to PCCF, Shimla on 28 Sep 2022. (c) Proposal further forwarded by State Forest Department and reached IRO, Shimla on 12 Apr 2023.

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STATUS OF PENDING WLC CASES : BRO

S/No.	State	Project	Name of Road	Proposed Specification	State Serial No./ID No. On Parivesh Portal	Status
43.	Arunachal Pradesh	Udayak	Mipi- Andrathang	NHSL	FP/AR/ROAD/ 148566/2021	(a) Case approved by SBWL on 14 th Sep 2022. (b) Biodiversity impact study carried out by ZSI (Govt. Accredited Firm) and uploaded on PARIVESH dt 25 Mar 2023. (c) Matter is scheduled for discussion in forthcoming NBWL meeting.
44.		Vartak	Balipara- Charduwar- Tawang (Pinjoli Br)	NHDL	FP/AR/ROAD/ 6063/2021	The case is approved by SBWL and submitted to NBWL.
45.	UT of J&K	Sampark	Akhnoor- Poonch	NHDL	FP/AR/DEF/156817/2022	(a) Stage I clearance acquired from State Govt on 03 Dec 2022. (b) Stage II clearance along with WLC under progress.
46.	Rajasthan	Chetak	Bakashar Mavasari	NHDL	FP/GJ/Road/43017/2019	(a) Stage I accorded for FC 05 May 2022. (b) EDS was raised by NBWL on 22 Aug 2022 regarding Wildlife Management Plan. (c) Wildlife Management Plan submitted to Dy Conservator of Forests, Palampur on 20 Mar 2023. (d) Reply of EDS is awaited from Forest Department.
47.	UT of Ladakh	Vijayak	Leh- Chalunka (Km 70 to Km 85)	NHDL	FP/LA/DEF/5916/2021	(a) Proposal accepted by Chief Wildlife Warden Ladakh for consideration by State Wild-life Board 03 Mar 2023. (b) The case will be discussed in the upcoming State Wildlife Board.
48.	UT of Ladakh	Himank	Chusul- Dungi- Fackche- Demchok	NHSL	FP/LA/Road/6658/2022	(a) NPV/Amount ₹ 45.16 Cr paid to Wildlife Department Leh. (b) For Chushul to Dungi portion a fresh case has been taken up and uploaded on PARIVESH on 20 Sep 2022. (c) Fresh joint survey under progress from Km 0.000 to Km 49.200 due to change in length of the road.
49.		Vijayak	Leh- Chalunka (Km 108 to Km 118)	NHDL	FP/LA/DEF/6713/2022 (New PARIVESH Reference WL/LA/DEF/4 18768/2023)	(a) Proposal uploaded on PARIVESH. (b) Case is ready for next SBWL meeting.

STATUS OF PENDING QUARRY CASES UNDER UT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Annexure-III

S/No	State	District	Name of road in Full	Loc of Quarry (Km)	Type of Quarry Mtri (Stone/Sand/Metal/RBM etc)	Approx Yield (Cum)	Processed under yearly Lease of Permanent Acquisition	Date of initiation initially	Pending with	Present Position	Remarks/Action taken by (P) to Resolve the issue
1	J & K (UT)	Bandipur	Dawar-Niru-Baruab-Chakwali-Kaobal Gali	3.50	Stone, Sand (River Bed Quarry)	5000.00	Short term permit	29 Jul 2021	Department of geology and mining	Awaited for NOC	(i) Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 56 RCC letter No 2010/Quarry/88/E2 dt 31 Aug 2021 for allotment of Quarry (ii) Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 32 BRTF letter No 2210/Quarry/96/E2 dt 17 Feb 2022 for allotment of Quarry
2	J & K (UT)	Bandipur	Dawar-Niru-Baruab-Chakwali-Kaobal Gali Road	10.00	Stone, Sand (River Bed Quarry)	4000.00	Short term permit	29 Jul 2021	Department of geology and mining	Awaited for NOC	A letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 56 RCC letter No 2010/Quarry/85/E2 dated 30 Jul 2021 and 2010/Quarry/18/E2 dated 31 Aug 2021 for allotment of quarry.
3	J & K (UT)	Bandipur	Dawar-Niru-Baruab-Chakwali-Kaobal Gali	39.00	Stone, Sand (River Bed Quarry)	5000.00	Short term permit	29 Jul 2021	Department of geology and mining	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 56 RCC letter No 2010/Quarry/88/E2 dt 31 Aug 2021 for allotment of Quarry
4	J & K (UT)	Bandipur	Dawar-Niru-Baruab-Chakwali-Kaobal Gali	13.00	Stone, Sand (River Bed Quarry)	4000.00	Short term permit	29 Jul 2021	Department of geology and mining	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 32 BRTF letter No 2262/Quarry/90/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry
5	J & K (UT)	Bandipur	Dawar-Niru-Baruab-Chakwali-Kaobal Gali	16.00	Stone, Sand (River Bed Quarry)	3000.00	Short term permit	29 Jul 2021	Department of geology and mining	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 56 RCC letter No 2010/Quarry/88/E2 dt 31 Aug 2021 for allotment of Quarry
6	J & K (UT)	Bandipur	Dawar-Niru-Baruab-Chakwali-Kaobal Gali	22.00, 33.00 & 52.00	Stone, Sand (River Bed Quarry)	6000.00	Short term permit	29 Jul 2021	Department of geology and mining	Awaited for NOC	(i) Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 56 RCC letter No 2010/Quarry/88/E2 dt 31 Aug 2021 for allotment of Quarry (ii) Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 32 BRTF letter No 2210/Quarry/96/E2 dt 17 Feb 2022 for allotment of Quarry
7	J & K (UT)	Kupwara	Melyal-Pharkian gali-Dat br	22.00	Stone	8000.00	Short term permit	26 Jul 2021	District Mining Office, Kupwara	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 109 RCC letter No 2027/Quarry/18/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 and 2027/Quarry/19/E2 dated 20 Dec 2021 for allotment of Quarry
8	J & K (UT)	Kupwara	Melyal-Pharkian gali-Dat br	25.50	Stone	8000.00	Short term permit	26 Jul 2021	District Mining Office, Kupwara	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 109 RCC letter No 2027/Quarry/18/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry
9	J & K (UT)	Kupwara	Pharkian-Ustad-Ragini	3.00	Stone	3500.00	Short term permit	26 Jul 2021	District Mining Office, Kupwara	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 109 RCC letter No 2027/Quarry/18/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 and 2027/Quarry/19/E2 dated 20 Dec 2021 for allotment of Quarry.
10	J & K (UT)	Kupwara	Pharkian-Ustad-Ragini	10.00	Stone	8500.00	Short term permit	26 Jul 2021	District Mining Office, Kupwara	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 109 RCC letter No 2027/Quarry/18/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry
11	J & K (UT)	Kupwara	Kashwar-Nildon-Bangas-Lokut-Drangyari	37.50	Sand, Bajri & Boulder	7500.00	Short term permit	26 Jul 2021	District Mining Office, Kupwara	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to District Mineral Officer vide 109 RCC letter No 2027/Quarry/18/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 and 2027/Quarry/19/E2 dated 20 Dec 2021 for allotment of Quarry.

S/No	State	District	Name of road in Full	Loc of Quarry (Km)	Type of Quarry Mtri (Stone/Sand/Metal /RBM etc)	Approx Yield (Cum)	Processed under yearly Lease of Permanent Acquisition	Date of initiation initially	Pending with	Present Position	Remarks/Action taken by (P) to Resolve the issue
12	J & K (UT)	Gandherbal	SSG Road	34.00	Stone/RBM (River Bed Quarry)	10000.00	Yearly Lease	08 May 2020	District Mining Office, Gandherbal	Awaited for NOC	Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2069/PC/10/E2 dated 20 May 2021 and 32 BRTF letter No 2262/Quarry/91/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry.
13	J & K (UT)	Gandherbal	SSG Road	76.50	Stone (Hill Side Quarry)	10000.00	Yearly Lease	08 May 2020	District Mining Office, Gandherbal	Awaited for NOC	(i) At present quarry is not operational. Permission required from Forest/Minning department for extraction of stone. (ii) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2069/PC/10/E2 dated 20 May 2021 for allotment of Stone/sand Quarries. (iii) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 32 BRTF letter No 2262/Quarry/91/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry.
14	J & K (UT)	Gandherbal	SSG Road	102.00	Stone/Natural aggregates (Hill side Quarry)	10000.00	Yearly Lease	04 Feb 2019	District Mining Office, Gandherbal	Awaited for NOC	(i) Permission required from Forest/Minning department of extraction of stone/sand/RBM. Case take up with DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2068/BOO/MON/E2 dt 04 Feb 2019. (ii) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2069/PC/10/E2 dated 20 May 2021 for allotment of Stone/sand Quarries. (iii) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 32 BRTF letter No 2262/Quarry/91/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry.
15	J & K (UT)	Gandherbal	SSG Road	125.00	Sand Quarry	10000.00	Yearly Lease	04 Feb 2019	District Mining Office, Gandherbal	Awaited for NOC	(i) Permission required from Forest/Minning department of extraction of stone/sand/RBM. Case take up with DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2068/BOO/MON/E2 dt 04 Feb 2019. (ii) A letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2066/BOO/52/E2 dated 22 July 2020 for allotment of Stone/sand Quarries. (iii) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 32 BRTF letter No 2262/Quarry/91/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry.
16	J & K (UT)	Gandherbal	Sonamarg-Baltal Road	3.00-6.00	Sand /RBM Quarry	10000.00	Yearly Lease	15 Sep 2020	District Mining Office, Gandherbal	Awaited for NOC	(i) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2068/BOO/63/E2 dated 15 Sep 2020 for allotment of Stone/sand Quarries. (ii) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 122 RCC letter No 2069/PC/10/E2 dated 20 May 2021 for allotment of Stone/sand Quarries. (iii) Letter issued to the DC Gandherbal vide 32 BRTF letter No 2262/Quarry/91/E2 dt 29 Jul 2021 for allotment of Quarry.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (2023-24)

**MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
DEFENCE (2023-24)**

The Committee sat on Monday, the 18th December, 2023 from 1500 hrs. to 1615 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe , New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Jual Oram - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2	Shri Durai Murugan Kathir Anand
3	Kunwar Danish Ali
4	Shri Rahul Gandhi
5	Shri Annasaheb Shankar Jolle
6	Shri Suresh Kumar Kashyap
7	Prof. (Dr.) Ram Shankar Katheria
8	Dr. Rajashree Mallick
9	Shri Jugal Kishore Sharma
10	Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde
11	Shri Prathap Simha
12	Shri Brijendra Singh

Rajya Sabha

13	Dr. Ashok Bajpai
14	Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tasa
15	Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi
16	Smt. P.T. Usha
17	Shri G.K. Vasani
18	Lt. Gen. (Dr.) D. P. Vats (Retd.)

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. Sanjeev Sharma - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Tirthankar Das - Director

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and informed them about the agenda for the Sitting. The Committee then took up for consideration the following draft Reports:-

- i) **Draft Report on the subject 'A review of working of Defence Research and Development Organisation(DRDO)';**
- ii) **Draft Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Thirty-fifth Report (17th Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023-24 on General Defence Budget, Border Roads Organisation, Indian Coast Guard, Defence Estates Organisation, Defence Public Sector Undertakings, Welfare of Ex-Servicemen and Defence Pension (Demand Nos. 19 and 22)';**
- iii) **Draft Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Thirty-sixth Report (17th Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023-24 on Army, Navy, Air Force, Joint Staff, Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme and Sainik Schools (Demand Nos. 20 and 21)';**
- iv) **Draft Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirty-seventh Report on 'Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023-24 on Capital Outlay on Defence Services, Procurement Policy and Defence Planning (Demand No. 21)'; and**
- v) **Draft Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirty-eighth Report on 'Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Defence for the year 2023-24 on Directorate of Ordnance (Coordination and Services)–New DPSUs, Defence Research and Development Organisation and National Cadet Corps (Demand Nos. 20 and 21)'.**

3. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the above reports without any modifications. The Committee, then, authorized the Chairperson to finalise the above draft Reports and present the same to the House on a date convenient to him.

4. *****Does not pertain to the Report*****

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE THIRTY-FIFTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE (17TH LOK SABHA) ON DEMANDS FOR GRANTS OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE FOR THE YEAR 2023-24 ON 'GENERAL DEFENCE BUDGET, BORDER ROADS ORGANISATION, INDIAN COAST GUARD, DEFENCE ESTATES ORGANISATION, DEFENCE PUBLIC SECTOR UNDERTAKINGS, WELFARE OF EX-SERVICEMEN AND DEFENCE PENSION (DEMAND NOS. 19 AND 22)'

1. Total number of recommendations 50
2. Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government (please see Chapter II):
Recommendation Para Nos. 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22, 23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46,47,48,49 and 50.
Total : 49
Percentage: 98%
3. Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies received from the Government (please see Chapter III):
Recommendation Para No. –Nil-
Total : 0
Percentage: 0 %
4. Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee, which require reiteration and commented upon (please see Chapter IV):
Recommendation Para No. 4
Total : 1
Percentage: 2%
5. Observations/Recommendations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies/replies awaited (please see Chapter V):
Recommendation Para No. –Nil-
Total : 0
Percentage: 00 %